LITERATURE PRIMERS

Edited by JOHN RICHARD GREEN

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
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THE CHILDREN'S TREASURY OF ENGLISH SONG

SECOND PART

—

F. T. PALGRAVE

PR
1175
P35
1889
v.2
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Eng Lit.

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The disastrous Fire of February the 14th 1890

THE

CHILDREN'S TREASURY

OF

LYRICAL POETRY

SECOND PART

SELECTED AND ARRANGED WITH NOTES BY

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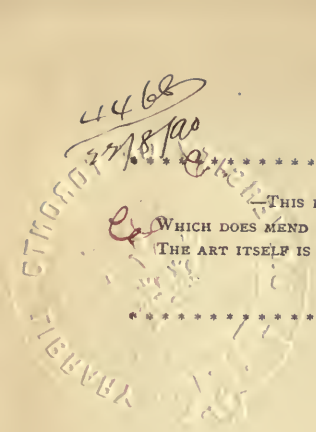
London

MACMILLAN AND CO.

AND NEW YORK

1889



—This is an art
Which does mend nature,—change it rather: but
The art itself is nature.—

Shakespeare: *Winter's Tale.*

The Publishers owe their thanks to the liberality of some English copyright owners; and also to Mr. William Cullen Bryant for the use of his two Poems "To a Waterfowl," and "The Death of the Flowers"; also to Messrs. James R. Osgood & Co. for permission to print Professor Longfellow's "The Wreck of the Hesperus," from their copyright edition of his works.

First printed 1875.
Reprinted 1879, 1881, 1883, 1885.
January, November, and December 1886, 1889.

PREFACE

THIS selection is planned for children between nine or ten, and fifteen or sixteen years of age; the pleasure and advantage of the older students in Elementary, and the younger in Grammar and Public Schools, being especially kept in view. As it is meant for their own possession and study, not less than for use as a class-book in the teacher's hand, sufficient notes (it is thought) have been added to render the volume by itself fairly comprehensible to children of average intelligence: and the editor hopes that this object may be his excuse with those who may consider the annotations too numerous.

The scheme of choice followed has produced a selection different from any known to the editor. Suitability to childhood is, of course, the common principle of all. But, this quality secured (so far as individual judgment can), nothing has been here admitted which does not reach a high rank in poetical merit; and the available stores of English poetry have been carefully reviewed for the purpose. The editor's wish has been to collect all songs, narratives, descriptions, or reflective pieces of a lyrical quality, fit to give pleasure, —high, pure, manly, (and therefore lasting)— to children in the stage between early childhood and early youth: and no pieces which are not of this character. Poetry, for poetry's sake, is what

he offers. To illustrate the history of our literature, to furnish specimens of leading or of less-known poets, to give useful lessons for this or the other life, to encourage a patriotic temper—each an aim fit to form the guiding principle of a selection—have here only an indirect and subsidiary recognition. It is, however, believed that, so far as the scope of the book coincides with such other aims, they may be more effectually served through the powerful operation of really good poetry, than when made the main object of a collection.

The standard of 'merit as poetry' (so far as the editor, aided by some friends distinguished by good judgment and scholarship, may have been successful in preserving it), has excluded a certain number of popular favourites. But the standard of 'suitability to childhood,' as here understood, has excluded many more pieces: pictures of life as it seems to middle-age—poems coloured by sentimentalism or morbid melancholy, however attractive to readers no longer children—love as personal passion or regret (not love as the groundwork of action)—artificial or highly allusive language—have, as a rule, been held unfit. The aim has been to shun scenes and sentiments alien from the temper of average healthy childhood, and hence of greater intrinsical difficulty than poems containing unusual words. Hence, although the rules of choice have given this book, as compared with many of its predecessors, an unfamiliar air, yet it is believed that the contents will in fact prove ultimately at least as comprehensible to children between the ages specified.

Poems suitable for readers in the latter half of these years are marked with a star in the index. Some pieces will be found admitted as examples leading up to the poetry appropriate to later education and the experience of life; but, looking to the small size of the collection, it has not been thought desirable to attempt ranging the contents in order of composition or of relative difficulty.

A few omissions have been made in order to render a poem more suitable for childhood, or to escape encroachment on the field of distinctly devotional verse; others, more copiously, when the poem could be thus strengthened in a vivid effectiveness. The North-country Ballads have thus been greatly shortened; a child (in the editor's judgment), especially one unfamiliar with dialect, being more likely to appreciate afterwards their charming antique garrulity, and the repetitions of phrase proper to orally-published poetry, if presented first with a tale in our more condensed modern manner. When, as here, poetry for poetry's sake is concerned, extracts in general appear wholly unsatisfactory to the editor; they are like fragments barbarously broken from statues. Such only have, therefore, been included which form in themselves complete works of art.

The rule that no piece should be admitted, unless reaching a high rank in poetical merit, if carried out successfully, will have rendered this book fit also for older readers. Such will know that the treasures here collected are but a few drops from an ocean, unequalled in wealth and variety by any existing literature; that many illustrious names are, necessarily, altogether absent; that many

others receive but a meagre and imperfect representation. Among the five (surviving) Imperial poets of the Western world, England claims two; but how faintly does a selection, limited as this, present the splendour of Shakespeare and Milton! Descending one or two steps, if Wordsworth and Scott, within this century, are fairly shown in a single region of their power, Keats, Shelley, Byron, Crabbe, on different grounds, must be nearly or wholly undisplayed. But, in truth, no selection should be planned or accepted as able to do more than open a glimpse into the 'Elysian fields' of song. Pleasant as has been the task of forming this book, in the hope that it may, in itself, prove a pleasure and a gain to the dear English and English-speaking children, all the world over,—yet the editor will hold his work but half fulfilled, unless they are tempted by it to go on and wander, in whatever direction their fancy may lead them, through the roads and winding ways of this great and glorious world of English poetry. He aims only at showing them the path, and giving them a little foretaste of our treasures:—

To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

F. T. P.

MAY: 1875

The Children's Treasury

SECOND PART

* I *

THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT

AGINCOURT, Agincourt! know ye not Agincourt?
Where the English slew and hurt
All the French foemen.
With our guns and bills brown,
O! the French were beat down,
Morris-pikes and bowmen!

T. Heywood

* * * * *

FAIR stood the wind for France
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnish'd in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt
In happy hour;

4 *bills*, pikes
3 *prove*, try
9 *fort*, castle
5 sailing forth
6 *Morris*-pikes, large-sized
7 *martial*, warlike
10 supplied for war

Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopp'd his way,
Where the French general lay
With all his power.

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
To the King sending;
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile,
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
'Though they to one be ten,
'Be not amazéd!
'Yet have well begun,
'Battles so bravely won
'Have ever to the sun
'By fame been raiséd.

'And for myself,' quoth he,
'This my full rest shall be;
'England, ne'er mourn for me,
'Nor more esteem me:—
'Victor I will remain,
'Or on this earth lie slain;
'Never shall she sustain
'Loss to redeem me.

'Poictiers and Cressy tell,
'When most their pride did swell.
'Under our swords they fell:—
'No less our skill is

13 *skirmishing*, irregular fighting
21 *which*, insult: *he*, Henry
26 *quoth*, spoke
37 *victor*, conqueror

17 *his*, the French general's
24 *portending*, prophesying
36 if I am beaten
40 pay ransom for

'Than when our grandsire great,
'Claiming the regal seat,
'By many a warlike feat
'Lopp'd the French lilies.'

The Duke of York so dread,
The eager vaward led;
With the main Henry sped,
Amongst his henchmen.
Exeter had the rear,
A braver man not there;
Heavens! how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone:
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan;
To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make
The very earth did shake;
Trumpet to trumpet spake;
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which did the signal aim
To our hid forces;
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
Stuck the French horses,

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
Piercing the weather;

47 *feat*, deed 48 see end 50 *vaward*, foremost men
52 *henchmen*, attendants 71 *archery*, bowmen
73 *yew*, used for bows 76 *weather*, air

None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbows drew,
And on the French they flew;
Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent;
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went;
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble King,
His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep-wound lent
His arms with blood besprent;
And many a cruel dent
Bruiséd his helmet.

Gloucester, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother,
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;

82 *bilbows*, swords
94 *besprent*, sprinkled
91 *ding*, cut down violently
102 *maiden*, untried

Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily—
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
To England to carry.
O when shall Englishmen
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry!

M. Drayton

* 2 *

AFTER BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening;
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh
'Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,
'Who fell in the great victory.'

111 *doughtily*, bravely 113 October 25
115 *fame*, report 118 give writers such a fine subject

'I find them in the garden,
'For there's many here about;
'And often when I go to plough
'The ploughshare turns them out.
'For many thousand men,' said he,
'Were slain in that great victory.'

'Now tell us what 'twas all about,'
Young Peterkin he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
'Now tell us all about the war,
'And what they fought each other for?'

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,
'Who put the French to rout;
'But what they fought each other for
'I could not well make out.
'But everybody said,' quoth he,
'That 'twas a famous victory.

'My father lived at Blenheim then,
'Yon little stream hard by;
'They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
'And he was forced to fly:
'So with his wife and child he fled,
'Nor had he where to rest his head.

'With fire and sword the country round
'Was wasted far and wide,
'And many a childing mother then
'And newborn baby died:
'But things like that, you know, must be
'At every famous victory.

'They say it was a shocking sight
'After the field was won;
'For many thousand bodies here
'Lay rotting in the sun:

'But things like that, you know, must be
'After a famous victory.

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
'And our good Prince Eugene;'
—'Why 'twas a very wicked thing!'
Said little Wilhelmine;
'Nay . . nay . . my little girl,' quoth he,
'It was a famous victory!

'And everybody praised the Duke
'Who this great fight did win.'
—'But what good came of it at last?'
Quoth little Peterkin:—
'Why that I cannot tell,' said he,
'But 'twas a famous victory.'

R. Southey

* 3 *

LUCY GRAY

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I cross'd the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

'To-night will be a stormy night—
'You to the town must go;
'And take a lantern, Child, to light
'Your mother through the snow.'

'That, Father, will I gladly do:
  ''Tis scarcely afternoon—
'The minster-clock has just struck two,
  'And yonder is the moon!'

At this the father raised his hook,
  And snapp'd a faggot band;
He plied his work;—and Lucy took
  The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
  With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
  That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
  She wander'd up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
  But never reach'd the town.

The wretched parents all that night
  Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
  To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on a hill they stood
  That overlook'd the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
  A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,
  'In heaven we all shall meet!'
—When in the snow the mother spied
  The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
  They track'd the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
  And by the long stone-wall:

And then an open field they cross'd :
The marks were still the same ;
They track'd them on, nor ever lost ;
And to the bridge they came.

They follow'd from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind ;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

W. Wordsworth

* 4 *

NURSE'S SONG

WHEN the voices of children are heard on the green,
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast,
And everything else is still.
Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
And the dews of night arise ;
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies.

'No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,
'And we cannot go to sleep ;
'Besides in the sky the little birds fly,
'And the hills are all cover'd with sheep.'

—Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,
And then go home to bed.——
The little ones leap'd, and shouted, and laugh'd ;
And all the hills echoéd.

W. Blake

* 5 *

INFANT JOY,

OR, THE BABY

'I HAVE no name;
'I am but two days old.'
—'What shall I call thee?'
—'I happy am ;
'Joy is my name.'
—Sweet joy befall thee !

Pretty joy !
Sweet joy, but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee :
Thou dost smile :
I sing the while,
Sweet joy befall thee !

W. Blake

* 6 *

THE BLIND LASSIE

O HARK to the strain that sae sweetly is ringin',
And echoing clearly o'er lake and o'er lea,
Like some fairy bird in the wilderness singin' ;
It thrills to my heart, yet nae minstrel I see.
Round yonder rock knittin', a dear child is sittin',
Sae toilin' her pitifu' pittance is won,
Hersel' tho' we see nae, 'tis mitherless Jeanie,—
The bonnie blind lassie that sits i' the sun.

1 *strain*, music
6 *pitiful pittance*, small livelihood
4 *minstrel*, singer
7 *mither*, mother

Five years syne come autumn she cam' wi' her mither,
A sodger's puir widow, sair wasted an' gane;
As brown fell the leaves, sae wi' them did she wither,
And left the sweet child on the wide world her lane.
She left Jeanie weepin', in His holy keepin'
Wha shelters the lamb frae the cauld wintry win';
We had little siller, yet a' were good till her,
The bonnie blind lassie that sits i' the sun.

An' blythe now an' cheerfu', frae mornin' to e'enin
She sits thro' the simmer, an' gladdens ilk ear,
Baith auld and young daut her, sae gentle and winnin';
To a' the folks round the wee lassie is dear.
Braw leddies caress her, wi' bounties would press her;
The modest bit darlin' their notice would shun;
For though she has naething, proud-hearted this wee thing,
The bonnie blind lassie that sits i' the sun.

T. C. Latto

* 7 *

NIGHT

THE sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine;
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.
The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight
Sits and smiles on the night.

9 *syne*, since 10 *sair*, sorely 12 *her lane*, alone
15 *siller*, money: *till*, to 18 *simmer*, summer: *ilk*, every
19 *daut*, dote on 20 *a'*, all 21 *braw leddies*, fine ladies
22 *bit*, little

Farewell, green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have ta'en delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen, they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are cover'd warm,
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm:—
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

W. Blake

* 8 *

SIMON LEE THE OLD HUNTSMAN

IN the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor Hall,
An old man dwells, a little man,
I've heard he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee,
When Echo bandied round and round
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days he little cared
For husbandry or tillage;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

11 *bandied*, sent

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind ;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reel'd and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices ;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices.

But O the heavy change !—bereft
Of health, strength, friends and kindred, see
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty :
His master's dead, and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick :
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick ;
His legs are thin and dry.
He has no son, he has no child ;
His wife, an agéd woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger ;
But what avails the land to them
Which he can till no longer ?

25 *bereft*, cut off from
28 in a huntsman's dress
32 only one left alive
47 what use is

Oft, working by her husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do;
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
'Tis little, very little, all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
—My gentle reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O reader! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle reader! you would find
A tale in everything.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it:
It is no tale; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.—

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock totter'd in his hand;
So vain was his endeavour
That at the root of the old tree
He might have work'd for ever.

64 *related*, told

'You're overtask'd, good Simon Lee,
'Give me your tool,' to him I said;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffer'd aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I sever'd,
At which the poor old man so long
And vainly had endeavour'd.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seem'd to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning;
Alas! the gratitude of men
Has oftener left me mourning.

W. Wordsworth

* 9 *

LULLABY FOR TITANIA

First Fairy

YOU spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our Fairy Queen.

Chorus

Philomel with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby!
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh!
So good-night, with lullaby.

84 *proffer'd*, offered
4 *Queen*, Titania
5 *Philomel*, nightingale

Second Fairy

Weaving spiders, come not here ;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence ;
Beetles black, approach not near ;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence.

Chorus

Philomel with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby ;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby ; lulla, lulla, lullaby !
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh !
So good-night, with lullaby.

W. Shakespeare

* 10 *

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

FROM Oberon, in fairy land,
The king of ghosts and shadows there,
Mad Robin I, at his command,
Am sent to view the night-sports here.
What revel rout
Is kept about,
In every corner where I go,
I will o'ersee,
And merry be,
And make good sport, with ho, ho, ho !

More swift than lightning can I fly
About this airy welkin soon,
And, in a minute's space, descry
Each thing that's done below the moon.

5, 6 whatever sport goes on
12 *welkin*, sky
13 *descry*, see

There's not a hag
Or ghost shall wag,
Or cry 'ware goblins! where I go;
But, Robin, I
Their feats will spy,
And send them home with ho, ho, ho!

Whene'er such wanderers I meet,
As from their night-sports they trudge home,
With counterfeiting voice I greet,
And call them on with me to roam;
Through woods, through lakes,
Through bogs, through brakes,
Or else, unseen, with them I go,
All in the nick
To play some trick,
And frolic it, with ho, ho, ho!

Sometimes I meet them like a man,
Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound;
And to a horse I turn me can,
To trip and trot about them round.
But if to ride,
My back they stride,
More swift than wind away I go,
O'er hedge and lands,
Through pools and ponds,
I hurry, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

By wells and rills, in meadows green,
We nightly dance our heyday guise;
And to our fairy King and Queen,
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies.

16 *wag*, stir 17 *'ware*, beware of 19 *feats*, doings
23 *counterfeiting*, mimicking 28 *in the nick*, at the right moment
42 *heyday guise*, frolicsome game 44 *minstrelsies*, songs

When larks 'gin sing,
Away we fling;
And babes new born steal as we go;
And elf in bed,
We leave instead,
And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho!

From hag-bred Merlin's time have I
Thus nightly revell'd to and fro;
And for my pranks men call me by
The name of Robin Good-fellow.
Fiends, ghosts, and sprites,
Who haunt the nights,
The hags and goblins do me know;
And beldames old
My feats have told,
So *valé, valé!* ho, ho, ho!

Unknown

* II *

THE FAIRY PRINCE

It was intill a pleasant time,
Upon a summer's day,
The noble Earl Mar's daughter
Went forth to sport and play.

And as she play'd and sported
Below a green oak tree,
There she saw a sprightly doo
Set on a branch so hie.

'O Coo-my-doo, my Love so true,
'If ye'll come down to me,
'Ye'll have a cage of good red gold
'Instead of simple tree.'

50 *wend*, go 51 *hag-bred*, witch-born: *Merlin*, a magician
60 *vale*, farewell 1 *intill*, in 7 *doo*, dove 8 *hie*, high
12 *tree*, wood

And she had not these words well spoke,
Nor yet these words well said,
'Till Coo-my-doo flew from the branch,
And lighted on her head.

Then she has brought this pretty bird
Home to her bower and hall,
And made him shine as fair a bird
As any of them all.

When day was gone and night was come,
About the evening-tide,
This lady spied a sprightly youth
Stand straight up by her side.

'O who are ye, young man?' she said,
'What country come ye frae?'
—'I flew across the sea,' he said,
''Twas but this very day.

'My mother is a queen,' he says,
'Likewise of magic skill;
''Twas she that turn'd me in a doo,
'To fly where'er I will.

'And it was but this very day
'That I came o'er the sea:
'I loved you at a single look;
'With you I'll live and dee.'

—'O Coo-my-doo, my Love so true,
'No more from me ye'll gae.'
—'That's never my intent, my Love;
'As ye said, it shall be sae.'

Thus he has stay'd in bower with her
For twenty years and three;
Till there came a lord of high renown
To court this fair ladye.

31 *in*, to 38 *gae*, go

But still his proffer she refused,
And all his presents too;
Says, 'I'm content to live alone
'With my bird Coo-my-doo.'

Her father sware a solemn oath,
Among the nobles all,
'To-morrow, ere I eat or drink,
'That bird I'll surely kill.'

The bird was sitting in his cage,
And heard what he did say;
He jump'd upon the window-sill:
''Tis time I was away.'

Then Coo-my-doo took flight and flew
Beyond the raging sea,
And lighted at his mother's castle,
On a tower of gold so hie.

The Queen his mother was walking out,
To see what she could see,
And there she saw her darling son
Set on the tower so hie.

'Get dancers here to dance,' she said,
'And minstrels for to play;
'For here's my dear son Florentine
'Come back with me to stay.'

—'Instead of dancers to dance, mother,
'Or minstrels for to play,
'Turn four-and-twenty well-wight men
'Like storks, in feathers gray;

'My seven sons in seven swans,
'Above their heads to flee;
'And I myself a gay goshawk,
'A bird of high degree.'

45 *proffer*, offer
71 *well-wight*, stalwart
75 *goshawk*, large hawk

This flock of birds took flight and flew
Beyond the raging sea ;
They landed near the Earl Mar's castle,
Took shelter in every tree.

These birds flew up from bush and tree,
And lighted on the hall ;
And when the wedding-train came forth
Flew down among them all.

The storks they seized the boldest men,
That they could not fight or flee ;
The swans they bound the bridegroom fast
Unto a green oak tree.

They flew around the bride-maidens,
Then on the bride's own head ;
And with the twinkling of an eye,
The bride and they were fled !

Unknown

* 12 *

THE ANCIENT MARINER

PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
—'By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
'Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

'The Bridegroom's doors are open'd wide,
'And I am next of kin ;
'The guests are met, the feast is set :
'May'st hear the merry din !'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
—'Hold off ! unhand me, gray-beard loon !'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

12 *eftsoons*, at once

He holds him with his glittering eye :—
The wedding-guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child :
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :
He cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner :—

'The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd ;
'Merrily did we drop
'Below the kirk, below the hill,
'Below the light-house top.

'The sun came up upon the left,
'Out of the sea came he !
'And he shone bright, and on the right
'Went down into the sea.

'Higher and higher every day,
'Till over the mast at noon'—
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner :—

'And now the storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o'ertaking wings.
And chased us South along.

23 *kirk*, church
25 *left*, East, as they were going South
32 *bassoon*, wind-instrument
36 *minstrelsy*, musicians

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around :
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,
Like noises in a swound !

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hail'd it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had ate,
And round and round it flew :—
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steer'd us through !

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo !

53 glaciers 56 *sheen*, shining 57 *ken*, see
62 *swound*, swoon 63 *Albatross*, great sea-bird

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perch'd for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmer'd the white moon-shine.

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
'From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
'Why look'st thou so?'—'With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.'

PART II

'The sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he
Still hid in mist,—and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird
That brought the fog and mist:—
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

75 *shroud*, rigging 76 *vespers*, evenings
93 *averr'd*, declared

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow follow'd free ;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breezé, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be ;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink ;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Heaven !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

And some in dreams assuréd were
Of the spirit that plagued us so ;
Nine fathom deep he had follow'd us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was wither'd at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

'There pass'd a weary time. Each throat
Was parch'd, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye!
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seem d a little speck,
And then it seem'd a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.
A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it near'd and near'd:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tack'd and veer'd.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,
And cried, A sail—a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

152 *wist*, perceived

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
Hither to work us weal ;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel !

The western wave was all a-flame,
The day was wellnigh done !
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun ;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was fleck'd with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace !)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd
With broad and burning face.

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears !
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres ?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate ?
And is that woman all her crew ?
Is that a Death ? and are there two ?
Is Death that woman's mate ?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold :
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice ;
'The game is done ! I've . . . I've won !'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

168 do us good 195 *hulk*, body of the ship

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listen'd and look'd sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seem'd to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night;
The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornéd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogg'd Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan,)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropt down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it pass'd me by
Like the whizz of my cross-bow.'

PART IV.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
'I fear thy skinny hand!
'And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
'As is the ribb'd sea-sand.

200 Near the Equator there is hardly any twilight
212 *dogg'd*, followed closely by

'I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
'And thy skinny hand, so brown.'
—'Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone; all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

I look'd upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I look'd upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I look'd to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they look'd on me
Had never pass'd away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But, oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide :
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside :

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread ;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charméd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watch'd the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they rear'd, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watch'd their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coil'd and swam ; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gush'd from my heart,
And I bless'd them unaware :
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I bless'd them unaware.

The self-same moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

'O sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole !
To Mary Queen the praise be given !
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck
That had so long remain'd,
I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew ;
And when I awoke, it rain'd.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank ;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :
I was so light ; almost
I thought that I had died in sleep
And was a blesséd ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind ;
It did not come anear ;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro, they were hurried about !
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
And the rain pour'd down from one black cloud ;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side :
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reach'd the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on !
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

312 *sere*, withered and dry 317 *wan*, pale

They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
It had been strange, e'en in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steer'd ; the ship moved on ;
Yet never a breeze up blew ;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes
Where they were wont to do ;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew !

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee :
The body and I pull'd at one rope,
But he said nought to me.'

'—I fear thee, ancient mariner !'
'—Be calm, thou Wedding Guest !
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest—

For when it dawn'd they dropp'd their arms,
And cluster'd round the mast ;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies pass'd.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun :
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mix'd, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

348 *corses*, dead bodies 361 *jargoning*, chattering

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sail'd on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid; and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The sun, right up above the mast,
Had fix'd her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion —
Backwards and forwards half her length,
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life return'd,
I heard, and in my soul discern'd
Two voices in the air.

396 *discerned*, heard

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'is this the man?
'By Him who died on cross,
'With his cruel bow he laid full low
'The harmless albatross.

'The spirit who bideth by himself
'In the land of mist and snow,
'He loved the bird that loved the man
'Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
'And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
'Thy soft response renewing—
'What makes that ship drive on so fast?
'What is the ocean doing?'

Second Voice

'Still as a slave before his lord,
'The ocean hath no blast!
'His great bright eye most silently
'Up to the Moon is cast—

'If he may know which way to go:
'For she guides him smooth or grim:
'See, brother, see! how graciously
'She looketh down on him!'

First Voice

'But why drives on that ship so fast,
'Without or wave or wind?'

Second Voice

'The air is cut away before,
'And closes from behind.

408 *penance*, punishment to do away sin 411 *response*, answer

'Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
'Or we shall be belated:
'For slow and slow that ship will go,
'When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

I woke; and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fix'd on me their stony eyes,
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse with which they died,
Had never pass'd away:—
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt once more:—
I view'd the ocean green,
And look'd far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen:—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

427 *belated*, too late 429 *abated*, over

It raised my hair, it fann'd my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring :—
It mingled strangely with my fears,—
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sail'd softly, too ;
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
The light-house top I see ?
Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
Is this mine own countree ?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God !
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn :
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
Aud the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock :
The moonlight steep'd in silentness
The steady weather-cock.

And the bay was white with silent light :
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were :
I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Heaven ! —what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars ;
I heard the pilot's cheer ;
My head was turn'd perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast :
Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :
It is the Hermit good !
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

'This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea :—
How loudly his sweet voice he rears !
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

497 *impart*, utter 507 *blast*, spoil 512 *shrieve*, cleanse from sin

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump :
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat near'd : I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow !
'Where are those lights so many and fair,
'That signal made but now ?'

'Strange, by my faith,' the Hermit said—
'And they answer'd not our cheer !
'The planks look'd warp'd ! and see those sails,
'How thin they are and sere !
'I never saw aught like to them,
'Unless perchance it were

'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
'My forest-brook along ;
'When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
'And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
'That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look'
(The Pilot made reply)
'I am a-fear'd.' 'Push on, push on !'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirr'd ;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard :—

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread :
It reach'd the ship, it split the bay ;
The ship went down like lead.

524 *trow*, think 530 *sere*, withered 535 *tod*, bush

Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drown'd
My body lay afloat ;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round ;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips--the Pilot shriek'd
And fell down in a fit :
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And pray'd where he did sit.

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man !'
The Hermit cross'd his brow,
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
'What manner of man art thou ?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale ;
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns :
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land ;
I have strange power of speech ;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me :
To him my tale I teach.

—What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bridemaids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O wedding-guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!
To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his Great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!
—Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-guest!
He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.'
— The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the wedding-guest
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.
He went like one that hath been stunn'd,
And is of sense forlorn:—
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

S. T. Coleridge

589 *vesper*, evening

* 13 *

THE FEARFUL STORY

'O WHERE have ye been, my long-lost lover,
'This long seven years and mair?'
'—O, I'm come again to seek your love,
'And the vows that ye did swear.'

'Now haud your tongue of my love and vows,
'For they can breed but strife;
'Now haud your tongue of my former vows,
'For I am another man's wife.'

'—Had I kenn'd that ere I came here,
'I ne'er had come to thee;
'For I might ha'e married the king's daughter,
'Were it not for the love of thee.

'I despised the crown of gold,
'And the fair ladye also;
'And I am come back to my own true Love,
'But with me she'll not go.

'Ye may leave your husband to himself,
'And your little son also,
'And sail with me across the sea
'Where the stormy winds do blow.'

'—O, what have you to keep me with,
'If I with you should go—
'If I should forsake my good husband,
'My little young son also?'

'—See ye not yon seven pretty ships—
'The eighth brought me to land—
'With merchandise and mariners,
'And wealth in every hand?'

7 *haud*, hold

She turn'd her round upon the shore,
  Her Love's ships to behold ;
Their mainyards and their topmasts high
  Were cover'd o'er with gold.

And she has gone to her little young son,
  Kiss'd him both cheek and chin :
'O fare ye well, my little son !
  'For I'll never see you again.'

She has drawn the slippers on her feet,
  Well wrought with threads o' gold,
And he's wrapt her round with the soft velvét
  To hold her from the cold.

She had not sail'd a league from land,
  A league but barely three,
Till she minded on her dear husband,
  And her little young son tee.

'O if I were on shore again,
  'On shore where I would be,
'No living man should flatter me
  'To sail upon the sea !'

—'O haud your tongue of weeping,' says he,
'Let all your mourning be ;
'I'll show ye how the lilies grow
  'On the banks of Italie.'

'—O, what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
  'That the sun shines sweetly on ?'
'—O, yon are the hills o' Heaven,' he said,
  'Where you will never win.'

'—O, whatna mountain is yon,' she said,
  'Sae dreary with frost and snow ?'
'—O, yon is the mountain of Hell,' he cried,
  'Where you and I must go !'

43 *minded on*, remembered 44 *tee*, too

And aye when she turn'd her round about,
Aye taller he seem'd for to be :
Until that the tops of that gallant ship
No taller were than he !

He strack the mainmast with his hand,
The foremast with his knee ;
The gallant ship was broken in twain,
And sank into the sea !

Unknown

* 14 *

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

IT was the schooner *Hesperus*,
That sail'd the wintry sea ;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
With his pipe in his mouth,
And watch'd how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailor,
Had sail'd the Spanish Main,
'I pray thee, put into yonder port,
'For I fear a hurricane.

'Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
'And to-night no moon we see !'
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laugh'd he.

3 *skipper*, captain 11 *veering flaw*, changeable gusts of wind
16 *hurricane*, sudden storm 17 *ring*, halo

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the North-east;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows froth'd like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shudder'd and paused, like a frighted steed,
Then leap'd her cable's length.

'Come hither! come hither! my little daughter,
'And do not tremble so!
'For I can weather the roughest gale,
'That ever wind did blow.'

He wrapp'd her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

'O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
'O say, what may it be?'
'—'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!'—
And he steer'd for the open sea.

'O father! I hear the sound of guns,
'O say, what may it be?'
'—Some ship in distress that cannot live
'In such an angry sea!'

'O father! I see a gleaming light,
'O say what may it be?'
But the father answer'd never a word,—
A frozen corpse was he.

Lash'd to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face to the skies,
The lantern gleam'd through the gleaming snow
On his fix'd and glassy eyes.

39 *fog-bell*, rung in thick weather to warn ships

Then the maiden clasp'd her hands and pray'd
That savéd she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who still'd the waves
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf,
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Look'd soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks they gored her sides
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roar'd.

At day-break on the bleak sea-beach
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair
Lash'd close to a drifting mast.

60 *reef*, bank of half-covered rock
65 *bows*, forepart
73 *shrouds*, mast-ropes
75 *stove*, was broken in
61 *fitful*, rising and falling
70 *carded*, combed fine
74 went clean over the deck
78 *aghast*, horrified

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair like the brown sea-weed
On the billows fall and rise.

H. W. Longfellow

* 15 *

ROSABELLE

O LISTEN, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

'Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew,
'And, gentle lady, deign to stay!
'Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
'Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

'The blackening wave is edged with white;
'To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
'The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
'Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

'Last night the gifted Seer did view
'A wet shroud swathed round lady gay;
'Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch;
'Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?'

—'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
'To-night at Roslin leads the ball;
'But that my lady-mother there
'Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

''Tis not because the ring they ride,
'And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
'But that my sire the wine will chide
'If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle.'

2 *feat*, deed
6 *deign*, be kind enough
8 *firth*, strait
10 *inch*, island
13 *seer*, prophet
22 *ring*, a game in which riders drove through a ring

O'er Roslin all that weary night
  A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam ;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
  And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
  It ruddied all the copse-wood glen ;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
  And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
  Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
  Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
  Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
  And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
  Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
  The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
  Lie buried within that proud chapelle ;
Each one the holy vault doth hold,—
  But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle !

And each Saint Clair was buried there
  With candle, with book, and with knell ;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
  The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

Sir W. Scott

36 *panoply*, complete coat of armour
38 *sacristy*, vestry : *pale*, space round altar
39 *foliage-bound*, carved with leaves
40 *mail*, chain-armour
41 *pinnet*, pinnacle
43 *fate*, death
50 with the old funeral service
52 *dirge*, funeral chant

* 16 *

GLENCOE

'O TELL me, Harper, wherefore flow
Thy wayward notes of wail and woe
Far down the desert of Glencoe,
  Where none may list their melody?
Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly,
Or to the dun-deer glancing by,
Or to the eagle that from high
  Screams chorus to thy minstrelsy?'

—'No, not to these, for they have rest :—
The mist-wreath has the mountain-crest,
The stag his lair, the erne her nest,
  Abode of lone security.
But those for whom I pour the lay,
Not wild-wood deep, nor mountain gray,
Not this deep dell, that shrouds from day,
  Could screen from treach'rous cruelty.

'Their flag was furl'd, and mute their drum :
The very household dogs were dumb,
Unwont to bay at guests that come
  In guise of hospitality.
His blithest notes the piper plied,
Her gayest snood the maiden tied,
The dame her distaff flung aside,
  To tend her kindly housewifery.

'The hand that mingled in the meal,
At midnight drew the felon steel,
And gave the host's kind breast to feel
  Meed, for his hospitality!

3 see end 8 screams in answer 11 *erne*, eagle
15 *shrouds*, hides 17 *mute*, silent 19 *unwont*, not accustomed
20 *guise*, look 22 *snood*, hair-ribbon worn by girls
26 *felon*, base, treacherous 28 *meed*, reward

The friendly hearth which warm'd that hand,
At midnight arm'd it with the brand,
That bade destruction's flames expand
Their red and fearful blazonry.
'Then woman's shriek was heard in vain,—
Nor infancy's unpitied plain
More than the warrior's groan, could gain
Respite from ruthless butchery!
The winter wind that whistled shrill,
The snows that night that cloked the hill,
Though wild and pitiless, had still
Far more than Southron clemency.
'Long have my harp's best notes been gone,
Few are its strings, and faint their tone;
They can but sound in desert lone
Their gray-hair'd master's misery.
Were each gray hair a minstrel string,
Each chord should imprecations fling,
Till startled Scotland loud should ring,
'Revenge for blood and treachery!'

Sir W. Scott

* 17 *

SONG OF THE EMIGRANTS IN BERMUDA

WHERE the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied,
From a small boat that row'd along
The listening winds received this song:
'What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze
Where He the huge sea monsters wracks
That lift the deep upon their backs,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?

30 *brand*, torch 34 *plain*, crying 35 *gain respite*, save itself
40 *clemency*, mercy 41 *chord*, string
1 *ride*, lie 2 *unespied*, hidden 6 *maze*, pathless sea

He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms, and prelate's rage :
He gave us this eternal spring
Which here enamels everything,
And sends the fowls to us in care
On daily visits through the air.
He hangs in shades the orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows :
He makes the figs our mouths to meet,
And throws the melons at our feet ;
But apples plants of such a price,
No tree could ever bear them twice !
With cedars chosen by his hand
From Lebanon he stores the land ;
And makes the hollow seas that roar
Proclaim the ambergris on shore.
He cast (of which we rather boast)
The Gospel's pearl upon our coast ;
And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
O let our voice His praise exalt
Till it arrive at Heaven's vault,
Which then perhaps rebounding may
Echo beyond the Mexique bay !'
—Thus sung they in the English boat
A holy and a cheerful note :
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.

A. Marvell

11 *stage*, plain 12 see end 14 *enamels*, colours brightly
19 the pomegrante seeds are like rubies
20 *Ormus*, island in the Persian Gulf 23 *price*, value
28 *proclaim*, give notice of ; *ambergris*, fragrant gum floating on the sea

* 18 *

THE PILGRIM

WHO would true valour see
Let him come hither !
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather :
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first-avow'd intent
To be a Pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round
With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound ;
His strength the more is.
No lion can him fright ;
He'll with a giant fight ;
But he will have a right
To be a Pilgrim.

Nor enemy, nor fiend,
Can daunt his spirit ;
He knows he at the end
Shall Life inherit :—
Then, fancies, fly away ;
He'll not fear what men say ;
He'll labour, night and day,
To be a Pilgrim.

J. Bunyan

* 19 *

TRUE GREATNESS

THE fairest action of our human life
Is scorning to revenge an injury :
For who forgives without a further strife
His adversary's heart to him doth tie :
And 'tis a firmer conquest truly said
To win the heart, than overthrow the head.

6 *relent*, slacken 7 *avow'd*, proclaimed 17 *daunt*, frighten
* *said*, called

If we a worthy enemy do find,
To yield to worth, it must be nobly done :—
But if of baser metal be his mind,
In base revenge there is no honour won.
Who would a worthy courage overthrow?
And who would wrestle with a worthless foe?

We say our hearts are great, and cannot yield ;
Because they cannot yield, it proves them poor :
Great hearts are task'd beyond their power but seld :
The weakest lion will the loudest roar.
Truth's school for certain does this same allow,
High-heartedness doth sometimes teach to bow.

Lady E. Carew

* 20 *

CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will ;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Not tied unto the world with care
Of public fame, or private breath ;

Who envies none that chance doth raise
Or vice ; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise ;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good :

8 it must be a noble thing to yield to a worthy enemy
9 *metal*, quality 11 *courage*, enemy 15 *seld*, seldom
Character, description 8 *private breath*, what his neighbours say
12 *state*, policy, craft

Who hath his life from rumours freed ;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat ;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make accusers great ;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend ;
And entertains the harmless day
With a well-chosen book or friend ;

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall ;
Lord of himself, though not of lands ;
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir H. Wotton

* 21 *

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

WHEN my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry, *'weep ! 'weep ! ' weep ! 'weep !*
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curl'd like a lamb's back, was shaved ; so I said,
'Hush, Tom ! never mind it, for when your head's bare,
'You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet : and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight,
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

13 *rumours*, I suppose, vain alarms
15 not rich enough to invite flatterers or enemies
21 *servile bands*, from being bound like a slave

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,
And he open'd the coffins, and set them all free ;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind ;
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke ; and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work ;
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm :
So, if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

W. Blake

* 22 *

DEATH THE LEVELLER

THE glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things ;
There is no armour against fate ;
Death lays his icy hand on kings :
Sceptre and Crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crookéd scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill :
But their strong nerves at last must yield ;
They tame but one another still :
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

1 *blood and state*, life and condition must die
5 kings and labourers, all
9 *field*, of glory
10 and gain fresh fame
12 *tame*, conquer

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds!
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb:—
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

J. Shirley

* 23 *

READEN OV A HEAD-STWONE

Dorset dialect

As I wer readèn ov a stwone,
In Grenley church-yard, all alwone,
A little maïd ran up, wi' pride
To zee me there; an' push'd azide
A bunch o' bennets, that did hide
A verse her father, as she zaid,
Put up above her mother's head
To tell how much he loved her.

The verse wer short, but very good,
I stood an' learn'd en where I stood,
'Mid God, dear Meäry, gi'e me greäce
'To vind, like thee, a better pleäce,
'Where I, oonce mwore, mid zee thy feäce;
'An' bring thy childern up, to know
'His word, that they mid come an' show
'Thy soul how much I loved thee.'

'Where's father, then,' I zaid, 'my chile?'
'Dead, too,' she answer'd wi' a smile:
'An' I an' brother Jem do bide
'At Betty White's, o' tother zide

17 *garlands*, crowns of glory 20 *victor-victim*, the dying conqueror
23 *just*, good
Head-stwone, stone at head of a grave 5 *bennets*, bent-grass
11 *mid*, might 12 *vind*, find 19 *bide*, *live*

'O' road.'—'Mid He, my chile,' I cried,
'That's father to the fatherless,
'Become thy father now, an' bless
'An' keep, an' lead, an' love thee.'
—Though she've a-lost, I thought, so much,
Still He don't let the thoughts o't touch
Her litsome heart, by day or night;
An' zoo, if we could teäke it right,
Do show He'll meake his burdens light
To weaker souls; an' that his smile,
Is sweet upon a little chile,
When they be dead that loved it.

W. Barnes

* 24 *

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

NOT a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin inclosed his breast,
Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

27 *litsome*, light
2 *rampart*, wall or line of fortification
4 *hero*, noble and loved one
12 *martial*, soldier's
1 *note*, sound
3 *discharged*, fired
11 *warrior*, soldier

We thought as we hollow'd his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

C. Wolfe

* 25 *

THE BRITISH SOLDIER IN CHINA

LAST night among his fellow-roughs
He jested, quaff'd, and swore:
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never look'd before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

22 *ashes*, body: *upbraid*, blame 23 *reck*, care
6 Lord Elgin was then our ambassador in China: see end
7 *ambassador*, person sent to represent the Queen
8 *type*, example

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
  Bewilder'd, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
  He yet can call his own.
Ay! tear his body limb from limb;
  Bring cord, or axe, or flame!—
He only knows, that not through him
  Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hopfields round him seem'd
  Like dreams to come and go;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleam'd,
  One sheet of living snow:
The smoke above his father's door
  In gray soft eddyings hung:—
Must he then watch it rise no more,
  Doom'd by himself, so young?

Yes, Honour calls!—with strength like steel
  He put the vision by:
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel;
  An English lad must die!
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
  With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink
  To his red grave he went.

—Vain, mightiest fleets of iron framed;
  Vain, those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
  The strong heart of her sons!
So, let his name through Europe ring—
  A man of mean estate
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
  Because his soul was great.

Sir F. H. Doyle

10 *bewildered*, puzzled
11 full of true English feeling
17 The Buffs are the East Kent Regiment
19 *leagues*, miles
26 *vision*, thought of home
32 *red*, bloody
39 Leonidas, who died at Thermopylæ

* 26 *

YOUNG LOCHINVAR

O, YOUNG Lochinvar is come out of the West!
Through all the wide Border his steed is the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none;
He rode all unarm'd and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar!

He stay'd not for brake and he stopp'd not for stone;
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented; the gallant came late;
For a laggard in love and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen and kinsmen and brothers and all;—
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,
'O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
'Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?'

—'I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied;
'Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
'And now am I come with this lost Love of mine
'To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
'There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
'That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar!'

The bride kiss'd the goblet, the knight took it up,
He quaff'd off the wine and he threw down the cup;

5 *dauntless*, bold 19 *suit*, courtship

She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye :—
He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar ;
'Now tread we a measure!' said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace :
While her mother did fret and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume ;
And the bride-maidens whispered, ''Twere better by far
'To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar!'

One touch to her hand and one word in her ear,
When they reach'd the hall door; and the charger stood near ;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
'She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush and scaur,
'They'll have fleet steeds that follow!' quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan ;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran ;
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie lea ;
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see :—
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Sir W. Scott

30 *measure*, dance
32 *galliard*, lively dance
38 *charger*, war-horse
39 *croupe*, hind-part
41 *scaur*, broken cliff-side
43 *clan*, family

* 27 *

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

O LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing ;
And love, in life's extremity,
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower
To watch her Love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
Her form decay'd by pining,
Till through her wasted hand, at night,
You saw the taper shining.
By fits a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek was flying ;
By fits so ashy pale she grew
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear
Seem'd in her frame residing ;
Before the watch-dog prick'd his ear
She heard her lover's riding ;
Ere scarce a distant form was kenn'd
She knew and waved to greet him,
And o'er the battlement did bend
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he pass'd—a heedless gaze
As o'er some stranger glancing ;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing :—
The castle-arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan
Which told her heart was broken.

Sir W. Scott

13 *hectic*, fitful colour of consumption

* 28 *

ANNAN WATER

'ANNAN Water's wading deep,
'And my Love Annie's wondrous bonny;
'And I am loath she should wet her feet,
'Because I love her best of ony.'

He's loupen on his bonny gray,
He rode the right gate and the ready;
For all the storm he wadna stay,
For seeking of his bonny lady.

And he has ridden o'er field and fell,
Through moor, and moss, and many a mire;
His spurs of steel were sair to bide,
And from her four feet flew the fire.

'My bonny gray, now play your part!
'If ye be the steed that wins my dearie,
'With corn and hay ye'll be fed for aye,
'And never spur shall make you wearie.'

The gray was a mare, and a right gude mare;
But when she wan the Annan Water,
She could not have ridden the ford that night
Had a thousand merks been wadded at her.

'O boatman, boatman, put off your boat,
'Put off your boat for golden money!'
But for all the gold in fair Scotland,
He dared not take him through to Annie.

'O I was sworn so late yestreen,
'Not by a single oath, but mony!
'I'll cross the drumly stream to-night,
'Or never could I face my honey.'

5 *loupen*, leapèd
6 *gate*, way
11 *sair*, hard
18 *wan*, reached
20 *merks*, old coin: *wadded at*, betted upon
27 *drumly*, muddy

The side was stey, and the bottom deep,
From bank to brae the water pouring;
The bonny gray mare she swat for fear,
For she heard the water-kelpy roaring.

He spurr'd her forth into the flood,
I wot she swam both strong and steady;
But the stream was broad, and her strength did fail,
And he never saw his bonny lady!

Unknown

* 29 *

THE ROVER

'A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
'A weary lot is thine!
'To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
'And press the rue for wine.
'A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
'A feather of the blue,
'A doublet of the Lincoln green—
'No more of me you knew
'My Love!
'No more of me you knew.

'The morn is merry June, I trow,
'The rose is budding fain;
'But she shall bloom in winter snow
'Ere we two meet again.'
He turn'd his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
Said 'Adieu for evermore
'My Love!
'And adieu for evermore.'

Sir W. Scott

29 *stey*, steep 30 *brae*, slope 32 *kelpy*, spirit
5 *mien*, face, air 12 *fain*, gaily

* 30 *

A MORNING SONG

PACK, clouds, away, and welcome day :
With night we banish sorrow ;
Sweet air blow soft, mount larks aloft,
To give my Love good-morrow !
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark I'll borrow ;
Bird prune thy wing, nightingale sing,
To give my Love good-morrow ;
To give my Love good-morrow
Notes from them both I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, Robin-red-breast,
Sing birds in every furrow ;
And from each hill, let music shrill
Give my fair Love good-morrow !
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow !
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
Sing my fair Love good-morrow ;
To give my Love good-morrow
Sing birds in every furrow !

T. Heywood

* 31 *

A HAPPY LIFE

UNDER the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat—
Come hither, come hither, come hither !
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

2 *banish*, send away
16 *stare*, starlin
17 *elves*, little live things

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

W. Shakespeare

* 32 *

TO BLOSSOMS

FAIR pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here a while
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave:
And after they have shown their pride
Like you, a while, they glide
Into the grave.

R. Herrick

9 *ambition*, struggle to get on
3 *date*, time
15 *brave*, brilliant
1 promises of fruit
16 *pride*, beauty

* 33 *

THE DAFFODILS

I WANDER'D lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake beneath the trees
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky-way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :—
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company!
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

W. Wordsworth

* 34 *

A THANKSGIVING TO GOD, FOR HIS HOUSE

LORD, thou hast given me a cell,
Wherein to dwell;
A little house, whose humble roof
Is weather-proof;

7 *continuous*, close together 10 *margin*, edge
18 *wealth*, benefit 20 idle or thoughtful 21 *inward eye*, thought

Under the spars of which I lie
Both soft and dry ;
Where thou, my chamber for to ward,
Hast set a guard
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep
Me, while I sleep.
Low is my porch, as is my fate :
Both void of state ;
And yet the threshold of my door
Is worn by th' poor,
Who thither come, and freely get
Good words, or meat.
Like as my parlour, so my hall
And kitchen's small ;
A little buttery, and therein
A little bin,
Which keeps my little loaf of bread
Unchipt, unflead ;
Some brittle sticks of thorn or briar
Make me a fire,
Close by whose living coal I sit,
And glow like it.
Lord, I confess too, when I dine,
The pulse is thine,
And all those other bits that be
There placed by thee ;
The worts, the purslain, and the mess
Of water-cress,
Which of thy kindness thou hast sent ;
And my content
Makes those, and my beloved beet,
To be more sweet.
'Tis thou that crown'st my glittering hearth
With guiltless mirth,

5 *spars*, timbers 7 *ward*, protect 11 *fate*, place in life
12 *state*, grandeur 22 *unflead*, unpared
28 *pulse*, pottage 31 *purslain*, a salad

And giv'st me wassail-bowls to drink,
Spiced to the brink.
Lord, 'tis thy plenty-dropping hand
That soils my land,
And giv'st me, for my bushel sown,
Twice ten for one;
Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay
Her egg each day;
Besides my healthful ewes to bear
Me twins each year;
The while the conduits of my kine
Run cream, for wine:
All these, and better, thou dost send
Me,—to this end,
That I should render, for my part,
A thankful heart.

R. Herrick

* 35 *

SUNSHINE AFTER A SHOWER

EVER after summer shower,
When the bright sun's returning power
With laughing beam has chased the storm,
And cheer'd reviving Nature's form,
By sweet-briar hedges bathed in dew,
Let me my wholesome path pursue;
There, issuing forth, the frequent snail
Wears the dank way with slimy trail;
While as I walk, from pearlèd bush
The sunny, sparkling drop I brush;
And all the landscape fair I view
Clad in robe of fresher hue;
And so loud the blackbird sings,
That far and near the valley rings.

39 *wassail-bowls*, cups of old ale
42 *soils*, manures
49 *conduits*, udders
8 *dank*, moist: *trail*, track

From shelter deep of shaggy rock
The shepherd drives his joyful flock;
From bowering beech the mower blithe
With new-born vigour grasps the scythe;
While o'er the smooth unbounded meads
His last faint gleam the rainbow spreads.

T. Warton

* 36 *

THE HOCK-CART, OR HARVEST-HOME

COME, sons of summer, by whose toil
We are the lords of wine and oil;
By whose tough labours and rough hands,
We rip up first, then reap our lands.
Crown'd with the ears of corn, now come,
And, to the pipe, sing Harvest Home!
Come forth, my lord, and see the cart
Drest up with all the country art:—
See, here a maukin, there a sheet,
As spotless pure as it is sweet;
The horses, mares, and frisking fillies,
Clad all in linen white as lilies:—
The harvest swains and wenches bound
For joy, to see the hock-cart crown'd.

About the cart hear how the rout
Of rural younglings raise the shout,
Pressing before, some coming after,
Those with a shout, and these with laughter.
Some bless the cart, some kiss the sheaves,
Some prank them up with oaken leaves;
Some cross the fill-horse, some with great
Devotion stroke the home-borne wheat;
While other rustics, less attent

18 *vigour*, strength
9 *maukin*, coarse cloth
21 *fill*, shaft-horse
7 *lord*, the Earl of Westmorland
14 *hock-cart*, last from harvest-field
23 *attent*, eager

To prayérs than to merriment,
Run after with their breeches rent.
Well, on, brave boys, to your lord's hearth,
Glitt'ring with fire, where, for your mirth,
Ye shall see first the large and chief
Foundation of your feast, fat beef!
With upper stories, mutton, veal,
And bacon, which makes full the meal;
With sev'ral dishes standing by,
As, here a custard, there a pie,
And here all-tempting frumenty.
And for to make the merry cheer,
If smirking wine be wanting here,
There's that, which drowns all care, stout beer;
Which freely drink to your lord's health,
Then to the plough, the commonwealth,
Next to your flails, your fanes, your fatts;
Then to the maids with wheaten hats;
To the rough sickle, and crook't scythe,
Drink, frolick, boys, till all be blythe.
Feed and grow fat, and as ye eat,
Be mindful that the lab'ring neat,
As you, may have their fill of meat;
And know, besides, ye must revoke
The patient ox unto the yoke,
And all go back unto the plough
And harrow, though they're hanged up now.
And, you must know, your lord's word's true,
Feed him ye must, whose food fills you:
And that this pleasure is like rain,
Not sent ye for to drown your pain,
But for to make it spring again.

R. Herrick

40 *fanes*, apparently weathercocks: *fatts*, casks
41 *wheaten*, straw 45 *neat*, oxen 47 *revoke*, call back

* 37 *

THE FIRST SWALLOW

THE gorse is yellow on the heath ;
The banks with speedwell flowers are gay ;
The oaks are budding, and beneath,
The hawthorn soon will bear the wreath,
The silver wreath of May.

The welcome guest of settled spring,
The swallow, too, is come at last ;
Just at sunset, when thrushes sing,
I saw her dash with rapid wing,
And hail'd her as she past.

Come, summer visitant, attach
To my reed roof your nest of clay,
And let my ear your music catch,
Low twittering underneath the thatch,
At the gray dawn of day.

C. Smith

* 38 *

TO A REDBREAST

LITTLE bird, with bosom red,
Welcome to my humble shed !
Courtly domes of high degree
Have no room for thee and me ;
Pride and pleasure's fickle throng
Nothing mind an idle song.
Daily near my table steal,
While I pick my scanty meal :—
Doubt not little though there be,
But I'll cast a crumb to thee ;
Well rewarded, if I spy
Pleasure in thy glancing eye ;
See thee, when thou'st eat thy fill,
Plume thy breast, and wipe thy bill.

3 *domes*, houses 5 the changeable crowd of proud and idle people
14 *plume*, trim

Come, my feather'd friend, again!
Well thou know'st the broken pane:—
Ask of me thy daily store;
Go not near Avaro's door;
Once within his iron hall,
Woful end shall thee befall.
Savage!—he would soon divest
Of its rosy plumes thy breast;
Then, with solitary joy,
Eat thee, bones and all, my boy!

J. Langhorne

* 39 *

TO THE SKYLARK

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet mightst thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine,
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

W. Wordsworth

18 *Avaro*, man too fond of money: here, perhaps, a fierce dog
19 *iron*, cruel 21 *divest*, take off 1 singer of the air, and wanderer through the sky 3 *aspire*, mount
8 *prompted*, caused by 12 without waiting for the leaves, like most birds 14 *privacy*, solitude 17 *type*, figure

* 40 *

THE LAST OF THE FLOCK

In distant countries have I been,
And yet I have not often seen
A healthy man, a man full grown,
Weep in the public roads alone;
But such a one, on English ground,
And in the broad highway I met;
Along the broad highway he came,
  His cheeks with tears were wet;
Sturdy he seem'd, though he was sad,
And in his arms a lamb he had.

He saw me, and he turn'd aside,
As if he wish'd himself to hide:
And with his coat did then essay
To wipe those briny tears away.
I follow'd him and said, 'My friend,
'What ails you? wherefore weep you so?'
—'Shame on me, sir! this lusty lamb,
  'He makes my tears to flow.
'To-day I fetch'd him from the rock;
'He is the last of all my flock.

'When I was young, a single man,
'And after youthful follies ran,
'Though little given to care and thought,
'Yet so it was, an ewe I bought;
'And other sheep from her I raised,
'As healthy sheep as you might see;
'And then I married, and was rich
  'As I could wish to be;
'Of sheep I number'd a full score,
'And every year increased my store.

'Year after year my stock it grew;
'And from this one, this single ewe,

'Full fifty comely sheep I raised,
'As fine a flock as ever grazed!
'Upon the Quantock Hills they fed;
'They throve, and we at home did thrive:
—'This lusty lamb of all my store
'Is all that is alive;
'And now I care not if we die,
'And perish all of poverty.

'Six children, sir, had I to feed;
'Hard labour, in a time of need!
'My pride was tamed, and in our grief,
'I of the parish ask'd relief;
'They said I was a wealthy man,
'My sheep upon the uplands fed,
'And it was fit that thence I took
'Whereof to buy us bread.
'*Do this; how can we give to you*,
'They cried, *what to the poor is due?*

'I sold a sheep as they had said,
'And bought my little children bread,
'And they were healthy with their food:
'For me—it never did me good.
'A woful time it was for me,
'To see the end of all my gains,
'The pretty flock which I had rear'd
'With all my care and pains,
'To see it melt like snow away—
'For me it was a woful day!

'Another still! and still another!
'A little lamb, and then its mother!
'It was a vein that never stopp'd—
'Like blood-drops from my heart they dropp'd
'Till thirty were not left alive;
'They dwindled, dwindled, one by one;

'And I may say that many a time
'I wish'd they all were gone;
'Reckless of what might come at last,
'Were but the bitter struggle past.

'To wicked deeds I was inclined,
'And wicked fancies cross'd my mind;
'And every man I chanced to see,
'I thought he knew some ill of me.
'No peace, no comfort could I find,
'No ease within doors or without;
'And crazily and wearily
'I went my work about:
'And oft was moved to flee from home
'And hide my head where wild beasts roam.

'Sir, 'twas a precious flock to me,
'As dear as my own children be;
'For daily with my growing store
'I loved my children more and more.
'Alas! it was an evil time;
'God cursed me in my sore distress;
'I pray'd, yet every day I thought
'I loved my children less;
'And every week, and every day,
'My flock it seem'd to melt away.

'They dwindled, sir, sad sight to see!
'From ten to five, from five to three,
'A lamb, a wether, and a ewe;
'And then at last from three to two;
'And, of my fifty, yesterday
'I had but only one:
'And here it lies upon my arm—
'Alas, and I have none;
'To-day I fetch'd it from the rock—
'It is the last of all my flock!'

W. Wordsworth

* 41 *

THE SHEPHERD IN WINTER

WHEN red hath set the beamless sun,
Through heavy vapours dark and dun;
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
Hears, half-asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail, and sleeted rain,
Against the casement's tinkling pane;
—The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox,
To shelter in the brake and rocks,
Are warnings which the shepherd ask
To dismal and to dangerous task!
Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
The blast may sink in mellowing rain;
Till, dark above, and white below,
Decided drives the flaky snow,
And forth the hardy swain must go.

Long, with dejected look and whine,
To leave the hearth his dogs repine;
Whistling and cheering them to aid,
Around his back he wreathes the plaid;
His flock he gathers, and he guides
To open downs, and mountain-sides,
Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
Least deeply lies the drift below.
The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,
Stiffens his locks to icicles;
Oft he looks back, while streaming far,
His cottage window seems a star,—
Loses its feeble gleam,—and then
Turns patient to the blast again,
And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
Benumbing death is in the gale:

24 *fells*, moors, high open ground

His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
Close to the hut, no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffen'd swain :
The widow sees, at dawning pale,
His orphans raise their feeble wail ;
And, close beside him, in the snow,
Poor Yarrow, partner of their woe,
Couches upon his master's breast,
And licks his cheek to break his rest.

Sir W. Scott

* 42 *

THE DOG AND THE WATER-LILY

THE noon was shady, and soft airs
Swept Ouse's silent tide,
When, 'scaped from literary cares,
I wander'd on his side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,
And high in pedigree,—
(Two nymphs adorn'd with every grace
That spaniel found for me,)

Now wanton'd lost in flags and reeds,
Now, starting into sight,
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads
With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse display'd
His lilies newly blown ;
Their beauties I intent survey'd,
And one I wish'd my own.

With cane extended far I sought
To steer it close to land ;
But still the prize, though nearly caught,
Escaped my eager hand.

3 *literary cares*, studying and writing
6 of a good breed
7 *nymphs*, girls
15 *intent*, attentively

Beau mark'd my unsuccessful pains
With fix'd considerate face,
And puzzling set his puppy brains
To comprehend the case.

But with a cherup clear and strong
Dispersing all his dream,
I thence withdrew, and follow'd long
The windings of the stream.

My ramble ended, I return'd;
Beau, trotting far before,
The floating wreath again discern'd,
And plunging left the shore.

I saw him with that lily cropp'd
Impatient swim to meet
My quick approach, and soon he dropp'd
The treasure at my feet.

Charm'd with the sight, 'The world,' I cried
'Shall hear of this thy deed;
'My dog shall mortify the pride
'Of man's superior breed;

'But chief myself I will enjoin,
'Awake at duty's call,
'To show a love as prompt as thine
'To Him who gives me all.'

W. Cowper

43

TO A FIELD MOUSE

WEE, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!

24 *comprehend*, make out
39 *mortify*, take down
1 *sleekit*, sleek
3 *na*, not
26 *dream*, thinking
41 *enjoin*, remind
2 *panic*, sudden fear
4 *bickering brattle*, flittering race

I wad be laith to rin and chase thee
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
And justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
And fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
's a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin':
And naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
And bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
And weary winter coming fast;
And cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!

5 *laith*, loath: *rin*, run
6 *pattle*, ploughstaff
7 man's cruelty to animals
13 *whyles*, at times
14 *maun*, must
15 a corn-ear now and then from a double shock
17 *lave*, rest
20 *wa's*, walls
21 *big*, build
22 *foggage*, after-grass
23 *ensuing*, following
24 *snell*, biting
29 *coulter*, plough-iron
30 *cell*, nest

Now thou's turn'd out for a' thy trouble
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble
And cranreuch cauld !

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain :
The best laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley,
And lea'e us nought but grief and pain,
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me !
The present only toucheth thee :
But, och ! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear !
And forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess and fear.

R. Burns

* 44 *

THE WORM

TURN, turn thy hasty foot aside,
Nor crush that helpless worm !
The frame thy wayward looks deride
Required a God to form.

The common lord of all that move,
From whom thy being flow'd,
A portion of His boundless love
On that poor worm bestow'd.

The sun, the moon, the stars, He made
For all His creatures free ;
And spread o'er earth the grassy blade,
For worms as well as thee.

34 *but hald*, without dwelling-place
35 *thole*, bear
36 *cranreuch*, hoarfrost
37 *thy lane*, alone
39 *schemes*, plans
40 often go awry
41 *lea'e*, leave

Let them enjoy their little day,
Their humble bliss receive ;
O ! do not lightly take away
The life thou canst not give !

T. Gisborne

* 45 *

THE GIRL DESCRIBES HER FAWN

WITH sweetest milk and sugar first
I it at my own fingers nursed ;
And as it grew, so every day
It wax'd more white and sweet than they—:
It had so sweet a breath ! and oft
I blush'd to see its foot more soft
And white,—shall I say,—than my hand ?
Nay, any lady's of the land !
It is a wondrous thing how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet :
With what a pretty skipping grace
It oft would challenge me the race :—
And when 't had left me far away
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay :
For it was nimbler much than hinds,
And trod as if on the four winds.

I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown
And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness :
And all the spring-time of the year
It only lovéd to be there.
Among the beds of lilies I
Have sought it oft, where it should lie ;
Yet could not, till itself would rise,
Find it, although before mine eyes :—
For in the flaxen lilies' shade
It like a bank of lilies laid.

24 *should*, might

Upon the roses it would feed,
Until its lips e'en seem'd to bleed:
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,
And print those roses on my lip.
But all its chief delight was still
On roses thus itself to fill,
And its pure virgin limbs to fold
In whitest sheets of lilies cold :—
Had it lived long, it would have been
Lilies without,—roses within.

A. Marvell

* 46 *

THE CHILD AND THE SNAKE

HENRY was every morning fed
With a full mess of milk and bread.
One day the boy his breakfast took,
And ate it by a purling brook.
His mother lets him have his way.
With free leave Henry every day
Thither repairs, until she heard
Him talking of a fine *gray bird.*
This pretty bird, he said, indeed,
Came every day with him to feed ;
And it loved him and loved his milk,
And it was smooth and soft like silk.
—On the next morn she follows Harry,
And carefully she sees him carry
Through the long grass his heap'd-up mess.
What was her terror and distress
When she saw the infant take
His bread and milk close to a snake !
Upon the grass he spreads his feast,
And sits down by his frightful guest,

Who had waited for the treat ;
And now they both began to eat.
Fond mother ! shriek not, O beware
The least small noise, O have a care—
The least small noise that may be made
The wily snake will be afraid—
If he hear the slightest sound,
He will inflict th' envenom'd wound.
—She speaks not, moves not, scarce does breathe,
As she stands the trees beneath.
No sound she utters ; and she soon
Sees the child lift up his spoon,
And tap the snake upon the head,
Fearless of harm ; and then he said,
As speaking to familiar mate,
' Keep on your own side, do, Gray Pate ; '
The snake then to the other side,
As one rebuked, seems to glide ;
And now again advancing nigh,
Again she hears the infant cry,
Tapping the snake, ' Keep further, do ;
' Mind, Gray Pate, what I say to you.'
The danger's o'er ! she sees the boy
(O what a change from fear to joy !)
Rise and bid the snake ' Good-bye ' ;
Says he, ' Our breakfast's done, and I
' Will come again to-morrow day ' ;
—Then, lightly tripping, ran away.

M. Lamb

* 47 *

THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN

SWEET to the morning traveller
The song amid the sky,
Where, twinkling in the dewy light,
The skylark soars on high.

And cheering to the traveller
The gales that round him play,
When faint and heavily he drags
Along his noontide way.

And when beneath the unclouded sun
Full wearily toils he,
The flowing water makes to him
A soothing melody.

And when the evening light decays,
And all is calm around,
There is sweet music to his ear
In the distant sheep-bell's sound.

But O! of all delightful sounds
Of evening or of morn,
The sweetest is the voice of love
That welcomes his return.

R. Southey.

* 48 *

A FAREWELL

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie;
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonnie lassie:
The boat rocks at the pier of Leith,
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the Ferry,
The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are rankéd ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody:

2 *tassie*, cup 4 *a service*, a health 8 *maun*, must

But it's not the roar o' sea or shore
Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shouts o' war that's heard afar—
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

R. Burns

* 49 *

ABSENCE

WHEN I think on the happy days
I spent wi' you, my dearie;
And now what lands between us lie,
How can I be but eerie!

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
As ye were wae and weary!
It was na sae ye glinted by
When I was wi' my dearie.

Unknown

* 50 *

TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON

WHEN Love with unconfinéd wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair,
And fetter'd to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses crown'd,
Our hearts with loyal flames:

4 *eerie*, in low spirits
7 *na*, not; *glinted*, went brightly
3 *Althea*, his lady-love
12 *flames*, feelings
6 *As ye*, as if; *wae*, sad
10 with no water in the wine

When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free—
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, linnet-like confinéd, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlargéd winds that curl the flood
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage:
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Colonel Lovelace

* 51 *

THE FORSAKEN

THOU hast left me ever, Jamie,
Thou hast left me ever;
Thou hast left me ever, Jamie,
Thou hast left me ever.
Aften hast thou vow'd that death
Only should us sever;
Now thou'st left thy lass for aye—
I maun see thee never, Jamie,
I'll see thee never!

20 *King*, Charles I. 28 a prison for a place of rest
2 *ever*, for ever

Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie,
  Thou hast me forsaken;
Thou hast me forsaken, Jamie,
  Thou hast me forsaken.
Thou canst love anither jo,
  While my heart is breaking;
Soon my weary e'en I'll close—
  Never mair to waken, Jamie,
    Ne'er mair to waken!

R. Burns

* 52 *

THE BRAES OF YARROW

THY braes were bonny, Yarrow stream,
When first on them I met my lover;
Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream,
When now thy waves his body cover!
For ever now, O Yarrow stream!
Thou art to me a stream of sorrow;
For never on thy banks shall I
Behold my Love, the flower of Yarrow.

He promised me a milk-white steed
To bear me to his father's bowers;
He promised me a little page
To squire me to his father's towers;
He promised me a wedding-ring,—
The wedding-day was fix'd to-morrow;—
Now he is wedded to his grave,
Alas, his watery grave, in Yarrow!

Sweet were his words when last we met;
My passion I as freely told him;
Clasp'd in his arms, I little thought
That I should never more behold him!

1 *braes*, sloping sides
14 *jo*, sweetheart
16 *e'en*, eyes
12 *squire*, go with and guard

Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost;
It vanish'd with a shriek of sorrow;
Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
And gave a doleful groan thro' Yarrow.

His mother from the window look'd
With all the longing of a mother;
His little sister weeping walk'd
The green-wood path to meet her brother;
They sought him east, they sought him west,
They sought him all the forest thorough;
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow.

No longer from thy window look—
Thou hast no son, thou tender mother!
No longer walk, thou lovely maid;
Alas, thou hast no more a brother!
No longer seek him east or west
And search no more the forest thorough;
For, wandering in the night so dark,
He fell a lifeless corpse in Yarrow.

The tear shall never leave my cheek,
No other youth shall be my marrow—
I'll seek thy body in the stream,
And then with thee I'll sleep in Yarrow.
—The tear did never leave her cheek,
No other youth became her marrow;
She found his body in the stream,
And now with him she sleeps in Yarrow.

J. Logan

23 *wraith*, ghost of person about to die 42 *marrow*, mate

* 53 *

ADAM OF GORDON

It fell about the Martinmas,
When the wind blew shrill and cold,
Said Adam of Gordon to his men,
'We maun draw to a hold.

'And whatna hold shall we draw to,
'My merry men and me?
'We will go to the house of Rodes,
'To see that fair ladye.'

The lady stood on her castle wall;
Beheld both dale and down;
There she was aware of a host of men
Came riding towards the town.

'O see ye not, my merry men all,
'O see ye not what I see?
'Methinks I see a host of men:
'I marvel who they be.'

She had no sooner buskit herself,
And putten on her gown,
Till Adam of Gordon and his men
Were round about the town.

The lady ran to her tower-head,
As fast as she could hie,
To see if by her fair speeches
She could with him agree.

'Give o'er your house, ye lady fair,
'Give o'er your house to me!
'Or I shall burn yourself therein,
'But and your babies three.'

4 *maun draw to a hold*, must go to a castle 7 *Rodes*, Rothes
12 *town*, walled dwelling-place. 17 *buskit*, dressed
28 *but and*, and also

'I winna give o'er, ye false Gordon,
'To no sic traitor as thee;
'And if ye burn my ain dear babes,
'My lord shall mak' ye dree.

—'Woe worth, woe worth ye, Jock, my man:
'I paid ye well your fee;
'Why pull ye out the grund-wa' stone,
'Lets in the reek to me?

'And e'en woe worth ye, Jock, my man!
'I paid ye well your hire;
'Why pull ye out the grund-wa' stone,
'To me lets in the fire?'

—'Ye paid me well my hire, ladye,
'Ye paid me well my fee;
'But now I'm Adam of Gordon's man,—
'Must either do or dee.'

O then bespake her little son,
Sat on the nurse's knee;
Says, 'O mither dear, give o'er this house!
'For the reek it smothers me.'

—'I winna give up my house, my dear,
'To no sic traitor as he:
'Come weel, come woe, my jewel fair,
'Ye maun take share with me.'

O then bespake her daughter dear,—
She was both jimp and small:
'O row me in a pair of sheets,
'And tow me o'er the wall!'

29 *winna*, will not 32 *dree*, suffer for it 34 *fee*, wages
35 *grund-wa'*, foundation 36 *reek*, smoke 44 *dee*, die
54 *jimp*, slender 55 *row*, roll

They row'd her in a pair of sheets,
And tow'd her o'er the wall;
But on the point of Gordon's spear
She gat a deadly fall.

O bonnie, bonnie was her mouth,
And cherry were her cheeks,
And clear, clear was her yellow hair,
Whereon the red blood dreeps!

Then with his spear he turn'd her o'er;
O gin her face was wan!
He said, 'Ye are the first that e'er
'I wish'd alive again.

'Busk and boun, my merry men all,
'For ill dooms I do guess;—
'I cannot look on that bonnie face
'As it lies on the grass.'

But when the ladye saw the fire
Come flaming o'er her head,
She wept, and kiss'd her children twain,
Says, 'Bairns, we be but dead.'

—O this way look'd her own dear lord,
As he came o'er the lea;
He saw his castle all in a lowe,
So far as he could see.

'Put on, put on, my mighty men,
'As fast as ye can dri'e!
'For he that's hindmost of the thrang
'Shall ne'er get good of me!'

66 *gin*, if 69 *busk and boun*, prepare and get ready
70 I see evil coming 79 *lowe*, red flame 82 *dri'e*, drive

Then some they rade, and some they ran,
Out-o'er the grass and bent;
But ere the foremost could win up,
Both lady and babes were brent.

And after the Gordon he is gane,
Sae fast as he might dri'e;
And soon i' the Gordon's foul heart's blood
He's wroken his fair ladye.

Unknown

* 54 *

HUNTING SONG

THE hunt is up, the hunt is up,
And it is well nigh day;
And Harry our king is gone hunting
To bring his deer to bay.

The east is bright with morning light,
And darkness it is fled;
And the merry horn wakes up the morn
To leave his idle bed.

Behold the skies with golden dyes
Are glowing all around;
The grass is green, and so are the treen
All laughing at the sound.

The horses snort to be at sport,
The dogs are running free,
The woods rejoice at the merry noise
Of Hey tantara tee ree!

The sun is glad to see us clad
All in our lusty green,
And smiles in the sky as he riseth high
To see and to be seen.

87 *win*, come 92 *wroken*, revenged 11 *treen*, trees
18 *green*, dress

Awake all men, I say again,
Be merry as you may;
For Harry our king is gone hunting,
To bring his deer to bay.

Unknown

* 55 *

THE RETIRED CAT

A POET'S cat, sedate and grave
As poet well could wish to have,
Was much addicted to inquire
For nooks to which she might retire,
And where, secure as mouse in chink,
She might repose, or sit and think.
Sometimes ascending, debonair,
An apple-tree, or lofty pear,
Lodged with convenience in the fork,
She watch'd the gardener at his work:
Sometimes her ease and solace sought
In an old empty watering-pot;
There, wanting nothing save a fan
To seem some nymph in her sedan,
Apparell'd in exactest sort,
And ready to be borne to court.

But love of change it seems has place
Not only in our wiser race;
Cats also feel, as well as we,
That passion's force, and so did she.
Her climbing, she began to find,
Exposed her too much to the wind,
And the old utensil of tin
Was cold and comfortless within:

1 *sedate*, sober 3 *addicted*, fond of
7 *debonair*, cheerful 11 *solace*, comfort 14 *nymph*, young lady
15 dressed in the height of fashion 23 *utensil*, the watering-pot

She therefore wish'd, instead of those,
Some place of more serene repose,
Where neither cold might come, nor air
Too rudely wanton with her hair,
And sought it in the likeliest mode,
Within her master's snug abode.

A drawer, it chanced, at bottom lined
With linen of the softest kind,
With such as merchants introduce
From India, for the ladies' use—
A drawer impending o'er the rest,
Half open, in the topmost chest,
Of depth enough, and none to spare,
Invited her to slumber there.
Puss, with delight beyond expression,
Survey'd the scene and took possession.
Recumbent at her ease, ere long,
And lull'd by her own hum-drum song,
She left the cares of life behind,
And slept as she would sleep her last;
When in came, housewifely inclined,
The chambermaid, and shut it fast;
By no malignity impell'd,
But all unconscious whom it held.

Awaken'd by the shock, cried Puss,
'Was ever cat attended thus!
'The open drawer was left, I see,
'Merely to prove a nest for me;
'For soon as I was well composed,
'Then came the maid, and it was closed.
'How smooth these kerchiefs, and how sweet!
'Oh! what a delicate retreat.
'I will resign myself to rest,

20 *wanton*, ruffle 30 *abode*, home 35 *impending*, hanging out
41 *recumbent*, lying down 45 *housewifely*, to make things neat
48 *unconscious*, not knowing 50 *attended*, waited on

'Till Sol, declining in the west,
'Shall call to supper, when, no doubt,
'Susan will come and let me out.'

The evening came, the sun descended,
And Puss remain'd still unattended.
The night roll'd tardily away,
(With her, indeed, 'twas never day,)
The sprightly morn her course renew'd,
The evening gray again ensued;
And Puss came into mind no more
Than if entomb'd the day before.
With hunger pinch'd, and pinch'd for room,
She now presaged approaching doom,
Nor slept a single wink or purr'd,
Conscious of jeopardy incurr'd.

That night, by chance, the poet watching,
Heard an inexplicable scratching;
His noble heart went pit-a-pat,
And to himself he said, 'What's that?'
He drew the curtain at his side,
And forth he peep'd, but nothing spied;
Yet, by his ear directed, guess'd
Something imprison'd in the chest,
And, doubtful what, with prudent care
Resolved it should continue there.
At length a voice which well he knew,
A long and melancholy mew,
Saluting his poetic ears,
Consoled him and dispell'd his fears.
He left his bed, he trod the floor,
And 'gan in haste the drawers explore,
The lowest first, and without stop

58 *Sol*, the sun 63 *tardily*, slowly 66 *ensued*, followed 68 *entomb'd*, buried 70 *presaged*, prophesied; *doom*, death 72 *jeopardy*, danger *incurr'd*, run into 73 *poet*, Cowper 74 *inexplicable*, what he could not make out 86 *dispelled*, drove away 88 *'gan*, began

The rest in order, to the top ;
For 'tis a truth well known to most,
That whatsoever thing is lost,
We seek it, ere it come to light,
In every cranny but the right.
—Forth skipp'd the cat, not now replete,
As erst, with airy self-conceit,
Nor in her own fond apprehension
A theme for all the world's attention :
But modest, sober, cured of all
Her notions hyperbolical,
And wishing for a place of rest
Anything rather than a chest.
Then stepp'd the poet into bed
With this reflection in his head :—

Moral

Beware of too sublime a sense
Of your own worth and consequence !
The man who dreams himself so great,
And his importance of such weight,
That all around, in all that's done,
Must move and act for him alone,
Will learn in school of tribulation,
The folly of his expectation.

W. Cowper

* 56 *

THE HARPER

On the green banks of Shannon when Sheelah was nigh,
No blithe Irish lad was so happy as I ;
No harp like my own could so cheerily play,
And wherever I went was my poor dog Tray.

95 *replete*, filled 96 *erst*, before 97 *apprehension* thought
98 *theme*, matter 100 *hyperbolical*, ridiculously grand
105 *sublime*, grand 111 *tribulation*, suffering

When at last I was forced from my Sheelah to part,
She said, (while the sorrow was big at her heart,)
Oh! remember your Sheelah when far, far away:
And be kind, my dear Pat, to our poor dog Tray.

Poor dog! he was faithful and kind to be sure,
And he constantly loved me although I was poor;
When the sour-looking folk sent me heartless away
I had always a friend in my poor dog Tray.

When the road was so dark, and the night was so cold,
And Pat and his dog were grown weary and old,
How snugly we slept in my old coat of gray,
And he lick'd me for kindness—my poor dog Tray.

Though my wallet was scant, I remember'd his case,
Nor refused my last crust to his pitiful face;
But he died at my feet on a cold winter day,
And I play'd a sad lament for my poor dog Tray.

Where now shall I go, poor, forsaken, and blind?
Can I find one to guide me, so faithful and kind?
To my sweet native village, so far, far away,
I can never more return with my poor dog Tray.

T. Campbell

* 57 *

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG.

GOOD people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a Man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran—
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes :
The naked every day he clad,—
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a Dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This Dog and Man at first were friends ;
But when a pique began,
The Dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the Man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran,
And swore the Dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a Man !

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad
To every Christian eye :
And while they swore the Dog was mad,
They swore the Man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That show'd the rogues they lied :—
The Man recover'd of the bite,
The Dog it was that died !

O. Goldsmith

58

THE PARROT

A True Story

THE deep affections of the breast
That Heaven to living things imparts,
Are not exclusively possess'd
By human hearts.

18 *pique*, quarrel 19 *ends*, objects 3 *exclusively*, only

A Parrot, from the Spanish main,
  Full young and early caged came o'er,
With bright wings, to the bleak domain
  Of Mulla's shore.

To spicy groves where he had won
  His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits, and skies, and sun,
  He bade adieu.

For these he changed the smoke of turf,
  A heathery land and misty sky,
And turn'd on rocks and raging surf
  His golden eye.

But petted in our climate cold,
  He lived and chatter'd many a day:
Until with age, from green and gold
  His wings grew gray.

At last when blind, and seeming dumb,
  He scolded, laugh'd, and spoke no more,
A Spanish stranger chanced to come
  To Mulla's shore;

He hail'd the bird in Spanish speech,
  The bird in Spanish speech replied;
Flapp'd round the cage with joyous screech,
  Dropt down, and died.

T. Campbell

* 59 *

ROBIN REDBREAST

GOOD-BYE, good-bye to Summer!
  For Summer's nearly done;
The garden smiling faintly,
  Cool breezes in the sun;

5 *Spanish main*, mainland of South America near West Indies, belonging to Spain 8 *Mulla*, island of Mull
10 *plumage*, feathers: *resplendent*, brilliant 12 *adieu*, farewell
13 *changed*, took instead: *turf*, the fuel of the Hebrides

Our thrushes now are silent,
  Our swallows flown away,—
But Robin's here with coat of brown,
  And ruddy breast-knot gay.
    Robin, Robin Redbreast,
      O Robin dear!
    Robin sings so sweetly
      In the falling of the year.

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
  The leaves come down in hosts;
The trees are Indian princes,
  But soon they'll turn to ghosts;
The scanty pears and apples
  Hang russet on the bough;
Its Autumn, Autumn, Autumn late,
  T'will soon be Winter now.
    Robin, Robin Redbreast,
      O Robin dear!
    And what will this poor Robin do?
      For pinching days are near.

The fire-side for the cricket,
  The wheatstack for the mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle
  And moan all round the house.
The frosty ways like iron,
  The branches plumed with snow,—
Alas! in winter dead and dark,
  Where can poor Robin go?
    Robin, Robin Redbreast,
      O Robin dear!
    And a crumb of bread for Robin,
      His little heart to cheer!

W. Allingham

5 covered with gold 30 *plumed* feathery

* 60 *

ODE TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness !
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run:
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease ;
For Summer has o'erbrimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen Thee oft amid thy store ?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twinéd flowers ;
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them,—thou hast thy music too,
While barréd clouds bloom the soft-dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river-sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;

2 *maturing*, ripening 3 *conspiring*, planning
12 *Thee*, Autumn 17 *drowsed*, made drowsy : *fume*, sleepy smell
25 *bloom*, cast a soft light upon 27 *wailful*, wailing

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ; 30
Hedge-crickets sing, and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

J. Keats

* 61 *

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sear.
Heap'd in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves lie dead ;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's tread.
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay, 5
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the gloomy day.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perish'd long ago,
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer glow ;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook in autumn beauty stood, 10
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone, from upland, glade, and glen.

30 *bourn*, hill bounding the view 31 *treble*, piping
7 *wind-flower*, Anemone nemorosa

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still
such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their
winter home ;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though
all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose
fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the
stream no more.

W. C. Bryant

* 62 *

TO DAFFODILS

FAIR Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon :
As yet the early-rising Sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song ;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a Spring ;
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the Summer's rain ;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew
Ne'er to be found again.

R. Herrick

16 *smoky*, misty
4 *attained*, reached
17 *fragrance*, sweet smell
13 we grow as fast towards death

* 63 *

CHRISTMAS IN OLD TIME

HEAP on more wood!—the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.

Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:
And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night;
On Christmas Eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas Eve the mass was sung:
That only night in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dress'd with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then open'd wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doff'd his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose;
The lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of 'post and pair.'
All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight
And general voice, the happy night,

4 *deemed*, thought
10 *rite*, observance
13 *mass*, divine service
15 *stoled*, robed
16 *kirtle sheen*, gay gown
21 *vassal, serf*, countrymen under landlord
26 *underogating*, without losing his place
27 a game at cards

That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of Salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's head frown'd on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garb'd ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassel round, in good brown bowls,
Garnish'd with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reek'd; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roar'd with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;—
But, O! what maskers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.

42 *green-garbed*, foresters were dressed in green
46 *wassel*, comfortable drink: probably old ale 56 *lists*, likes
57 *mystery*, rough stage-play 59 *visors*, masks 60 *dight*, dressed

'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

Sir W. Scott

64

RULE BRITANNIA

WHEN Britain first, at Heaven's command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sung the strain:
Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves.

The nations not so blest as thee
Must in their turn to tyrants fall:
Whilst thou shalt flourish, great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine!

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair;

64 *broached*, opened the cask
2 *azure main*, blue sea 3 *charter*, law 12 *foreign stroke*, attack
17 *flame*, spirit 19 *rural reign*, excellence in farming
21 *main*, sea 23 *the Muses*, arts and learning 24 *repair*, come

Blest Isle, with matchless beauty crown'd,
And manly hearts to guard the fair :—
Rule Britannia ! Britannia rules the waves !
Britons never shall be slaves !

J. Thomson

65

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

OF Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone ;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine ;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line :
It was ten of April morn by the chime :
As they drifted on their path
There was silence deep as death ;
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flush'd
To anticipate the scene ;
And her van the fleeter rush'd
O'er the deadly space between.
'Hearts of oak !' our captains cried, when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

4 all the power of the Danes 6 *brand*, torch 11 *bulwarks*, Danish ships 19, 20 our sailors rejoiced at what was coming 21 *van*, foremost ships 24 *adamantine*, very hard 26 like the sun hidden by a southern storm

Again ! again ! again !
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back ;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom :—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shatter'd sail ;
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
As he hail'd them o'er the wave,
'Ye are brothers ! ye are men !
'And we conquer but to save :—
'So peace instead of death let us bring :
'But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
'With the crews, at England's feet,
'And make submission meet
'To our King.'

Then Denmark blest our chief
That he gave her wounds repose ;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day :
While the sun look'd smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise !
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light ;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep

29 *havoc*, destruction 33 *wail*, sorrow 37 *victor*, conqueror
50 as the battle-smoke cleared off 57 *festal*, rejoicing

Full many a fathom deep
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore !

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died
With the gallant good Riou :
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave !
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing, Glory to the souls
Of the brave !

T. Campbell

* 66 *

TOM BOWLING

HERE, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew ;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broach'd him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft ;
Faithful, below, he did his duty ;
But now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare,
His friends were many and true-hearted,
His Poll was kind and fair :
And then he'd sing, so blithe and jolly,
Ah, many's the time and oft !
But mirth is turn'd to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft.

70 *condoles*, joins in lamenting
1 *sheer hulk*, ship without masts 4 *broach to*, brought him suddenly up so as to go over 8 *aloft*, up to heaven 12 his wife

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
The word to pipe 'all hands.'
Thus Death, who kings and tars despatches,
In vain Tom's life has doff'd:
For though his body's under hatches,
His soul has gone aloft.

C. Dibdin

* 67 *

THE LAWLANDS OF HOLLAND

THE Love that I have chosen
I'll therewith be content;
The salt sea shall be frozen
Before that I repent.
Repent it shall I never
Until the day I dee!
But the Lawlands of Holland
Have twinn'd my Love and me.

My Love he built a bonny ship,
And set her to the main;
With twenty-four brave mariners
To sail her out and hame.
But the weary wind began to rise,
The sea began to rout,
And my Love and his bonny ship
Turn'd withershins about.

There shall no mantle cross my back,
No comb go in my hair,
Neither shall coal nor candle-light
Shine in my bower mair;

20 *pipe*, whistle — 22 *doffed*, ended
23 *under hatches*, below the deck, buried
7 *the Lawlands*, probably here the flat sands of the coast
8 *twinn'd*, parted — 16 *withershins*, the wrong way; probably here, right over — 20 *bower*, girl's room

Nor shall I choose another Love
Until the day I dee,
Since the Lawlands of Holland
Have twinn'd my Love and me.

'Now haud your tongue, my daughter dear,
'Be still, and bide content!
'There's other lads in Galloway;
'Ye needna sair lament.'
—O there is none in Galloway,
There's none at all for me:—
I never loved a lad but one,
And he's drown'd in the sea.

Unknown

* 68 *

THE ANCHORSMITHS

LIKE Aetna's dread volcano, see the ample forge
Large heaps upon large heaps of jetty fuel gorge,
While, salamander-like, the ponderous anchor lies
Glutted with vivid fire, through all its pores that flies:—
The dingy anchorsmiths, to renovate their strength,
Stretch'd out in death-like sleep, are snoring at their length,
Waiting the master's signal when the tackle's force
Shall, like split rocks, the anchor from the fire divorce;
While, as old Vulcan's Cyclops did the anvil bang,
In deafening concert shall their ponderous hammers clang,
And into symmetry the mass incongruous beat,
To save from adverse winds and waves the gallant British fleet.

2 *gorge*, swallow greedily 3 *salamander*, reptile fabled to live in fire
4 *glutted*, filled through and through 5 *renovate*, refresh
8 *divorce*, withdraw 9 see end *incongruous*, shapeless 11 *symmetry*, accurate form: 12 *adverse*, opposing

Now, as more vivid and intense each splinter flies,
The temper of the fire the skilful master tries ;
And, as the dingy hue assumes a brilliant red,
The heated anchor feeds that fire on which it fed :
The huge sledge-hammers round in order they arrange,
And waking anchorsmiths await the look'd-for change,
Longing with all their force the ardent mass to smite,
When issuing from the fire array'd in dazzling white ;
And, as old Vulcan's Cyclops did the anvil bang,
To make in concert rude their ponderous hammers clang,
So the misshapen lump to symmetry they beat,
To save from adverse winds and waves the gallant British fleet.

The preparations thicken ; with forks the fire they goad ;
And now twelve anchorsmiths the heaving bellows load ;
While arm'd from every danger, and in grim array,
Anxious as howling demons waiting for their prey :—
The forge the anchor yields from out its fiery maw,
Which, on the anvil prone, the cavern shouts hurraw !
And now the scorch'd beholders want the power to gaze,
Faint with its heat, and dazzled with its powerful rays ;
While, as old Vulcan's Cyclops did the anvil bang,
To forge Jove's thunderbolts, their ponderous hammers clang ;—

15 as the dark iron grows red 19 *ardent*, white-hot
30 *prone*, lying flat : *cavern*, the smiths in their smithy

And, till its fire's extinct, the monstrous mass they beat
To save from adverse winds and waves the gallant British fleet.

C. Dibdin

* 69 *

THE VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

THE King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine.

In that same hour and hall
The fingers of a Hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice:—
'Let the men of lore appear,
'The wisest of the earth,
'And expound the words of fear,
'Which mar our royal mirth.'

35 *extinct*, gone out
2 *Satraps*, chief governors 19 *wax'd*, grew
20 *tremulous*, trembling 21 *lore*, wisdom 23 *expound*, explain
24 *mar*, spoil

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

A Captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth;
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night,—
The morrow proved it true!

'Belshazzar's grave is made,
'His kingdom pass'd away,
'He, in the balance weigh'd,
'Is light and worthless clay;
'The shroud, his robe of state;
'His canopy, the stone;
'The Mede is at his gate!
'The Persian on his throne!'

Lord Byron

* 70 *

EDWIN AND PAULINUS:

The Conversion of Northumbria

THE black-hair'd gaunt Paulinus
By ruddy Edwin stood:—
'Bow down, O king of Deira,
'Before the blesséd Rood!

25 *seers*, prophets 46 *canopy*, covering of throne *stone*, tombstone
4 *Rood*, crucifix

'Cast out thy heathen idols,
'And worship Christ our Lord.'
—But Edwin look'd and ponder'd,
And answer'd not a word.

Again the gaunt Paulinus
To ruddy Edwin spake :
'God offers life immortal
'For his dear Son's own sake !
'Wilt thou not hear his message,
'Who bears the keys and sword ?'
—But Edwin look'd and ponder'd,
And answer'd not a word.

Rose then a sage old warrior ;
Was five-score winters old ;
Whose beard from chin to girdle
Like one long snow-wreath roll'd :—
'At Yule-time in our chamber
'We sit in warmth and light,
'While cold and howling round us
'Lies the black land of Night.

'Athwart the room a sparrow
'Darts from the open door :
'Within the happy hearth-light
'One red flash,—and no more !
'We see it come from darkness,
'And into darkness go :—
'So is our life, King Edwin !
'Alas, that it is so !

'But if this pale Paulinus
'Have somewhat more to tell ;
'Some news of Whence and Whither,
'And where the soul will dwell ;—

13 *his*, the Bishop of Rome, who sent the mission to England

'If on that outer darkness
'The sun of Hope may shine ;—
'He makes life worth the living !
'I take his God for mine !'

So spake the wise old warrior ;
And all about him cried
'Paulinus' God hath conquer'd !
'And he shall be our guide :—
'For he makes life worth living
'Who brings this message plain,
'When our brief days are over,
'That we shall live again.'

Unknown

* 71 *

TO A FLY

BUSY, curious, thirsty Fly,
Drink with me, and drink as I !
Freely welcome to my cup,
Could'st thou sip and sip it up :
Make the most of life you may !
Life is short and wears away.

Both alike are mine and thine,
Hast'ning quick to their decline :—
Thine's a summer : mine's no more,
Though repeated to three-score :—
Three-score summers, when they're gone,
Will appear as short as one.

W. Oldys

* 72 *

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

OFT in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me :

2 before Sleep has made me his prisoner

The smiles, the tears
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken ;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimm'd and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken !
Thus in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends so link'd together
I've seen around me fall
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed !
Thus in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

T. Moore

* 73 *

THE POPLAR FIELD

THE poplars are fell'd, farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade :
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

16 *link'd*, joined
2 *colonnade*, row
21 *banquet*, feast

Twelve years have elapsed since I last took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew:
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat;
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;
Short-lived as we are, our enjoyments, I see,
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.

W. Cowper

* 74 *

FRIENDS DEPARTED

THEY are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingering here!
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest
After the Sun's remove.

5 *elapsed*, passed 11 *melody*, music 13 *fugitive*, flying
17 *engage*, lead 18 *muse*, reflect
5 *It*, memory 8 *remove*, setting

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days ;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmerings and decays.

O holy hope ! and high humility !
High as the Heavens above !
These are your walks, and you have show'd them me,
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death ; the jewel of the just !
Shining nowhere but in the dark ;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark !

He that hath found some fledged birdes nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown ;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as Angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

H. Vaughan

75

THE LAND OF DREAMS

'AWAKE, awake, my little boy !
'Thou wast thy mother's only joy ;
'Why dost thou weep in thy gentle sleep ?
'O wake ! thy father does thee keep.'

10 *trample on*, surpass greatly 17 *just*, good 19 *mysteries*, wonders 27 *transcend*, go above our usual thoughts

—' O what land is the Land of Dreams?
' What are its mountains, and what are its streams?
' O father! I saw my mother there,
' Among the lilies by waters fair.

' Among the lambs, clothéd in white,
' She walk'd with her Thomas in sweet delight:
' I wept for joy; like a dove I mourn:—
' O when shall I again return!'

—' Dear child! I also by pleasant streams
' Have wander'd all night in the Land of Dreams:—
' But, though calm and warm the waters wide,
' I could not get to the other side.'

—' Father, O father! what do we here,
' In this land of unbelief and fear?—
' The Land of Dreams is better far,
' Above the light of the morning star.'

W. Blake

* 76 *

DEATH IN LIFE

How soon doth man decay!
When clothes are taken from a chest of sweets
To swaddle infants, whose young breath
Scarce knows the way,
Those clouts are little winding-sheets,
Which do consign and send them unto death.

When boys go first to bed,
They step into their voluntary graves;
Sleep binds them fast; only their breath
Makes them not dead.
Successive nights, like rolling waves,
Convey them quickly, who are bound for death.

6 *consign*, mark them for:—the thought of the poem is, that everything in Life foreshows and longs for Death
11 *successive*, one after the other

When youth is frank and free,
And calls for music, while his veins do swell,
All day exchanging mirth and breath,
In company;
That music summons to the knell,
Which shall befriend him at the house of death.

When man grows staid and wise,
Getting a house and home, where he may move
Within the circle of his breath,
Schooling his eyes;
That dumb inclosure maketh love
Unto the coffin, that attends his death.

When age grows low and weak,
Marking his grave, and thawing every year,
Till all do melt, and drown his breath
When he would speak;
A chair or litter shows the bier
Which shall convey him to the house of death.

Man, ere he is aware,
Hath put together a solemnity,
And drest his hearse, while he has breath
As yet to spare:—
Yet, Lord! instruct us so to die,
That all these dyings may be life in death.

G. Herbert

77

TO-MORROW

In the downhill of life, when I find I'm declining,
May my lot no less fortunate be
Than a snug elbow-chair can afford for reclining,
And a cot that o'erlooks the wide sea;

15 *breath*, song 22 *schooling*, training
23 the walls of his house form themselves beforehand into a coffin
24 *attends*, is waiting for 29 *shows*, figures beforehand

With an ambling pad-pony to pace o'er the lawn,
While I carol away idle sorrow,
And blithe as the lark that each day hails the dawn,
Look forward with hope for to-morrow.

With a porch at my door, both for shelter and shade too,
As the sun-shine or rain may prevail;
And a small spot of ground for the use of the spade too,
With a barn for the use of the flail:
A cow for my dairy, a dog for my game,
And a purse when a friend wants to borrow;
I'll envy no nabob his riches or fame,
Nor what honours await him to-morrow.

From the bleak northern blast may my cot be completely
Secured by a neighbouring hill;
And at night may repose steal upon me more sweetly
By the sound of a murmuring rill:
And while peace and plenty I find at my board,
With a heart free from sickness and sorrow,
With my friends may I share what to-day may afford,
And let them spread the table to-morrow.

And when I at last must throw off this frail covering
Which I've worn for three-score years and ten,
On the brink of the grave I'll not seek to keep hovering,
Nor my thread wish to spin o'er again:
But my face in the glass I'll serenely survey,
And with smiles count each wrinkle and furrow;
As this old worn-out stuff, which is thread-bare to-day,
May become everlasting to-morrow.

J. Collins

15 *nabob*, newly rich man
28 *thread to spin*, live my life
29 *serenely*, calmly
31 *stuff*, his body

78

HUMAN LIFE

THIS Life, which seems so fair,
Is like a bubble blown up in the air
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere,
And strive who can most motion it bequeath.
And though it sometimes seem of its own might
Like to an eye of gold to be fix'd there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,
That only is because it is so light.
—But in that pomp it doth not long appear;
For when 'tis most admired, in a thought,
Because it erst was nought, it turns to nought.

W. Drummond

79

ADORATION

SWEET is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
Sweet Hermon's fragrant air:
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers smell
That watch for early prayer.

Sweet the young nurse, with love intense,
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;
Sweet when the lost arrive:
Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
The choicest flowers to hive.

5 *bequeath*, give 10 *pomp*, glory 12 *erst*, at first
10 *ardour*, passion for his work 11 *vague*, wandering: *quest*, search
12 *flowers*, of music

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
  Which makes at once his game:
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
  Shoots xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal
His eyeball—like a bastion's mole
  His chest against the foes:
Strong the gier-eagle on his sail;
Strong against tide the enormous whale
  Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still, in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer,
  And far beneath the tide:
And in the seat to Faith assign'd,
Where ask is, have; where seek is, find;
  Where knock is, open wide.

C. Smart

* 80 *

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

14 *glede*, kite
17 *turbulent profound*, stormy sea
18 *xiphias* sword-fish
20 *bastion's mole*, projecting piece of fortification
22 *gier-eagle*, large
24 *emerges*, rises above surface
1 *curfew*, evening bell
7 *droning*, long low humming

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the Poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour:—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

12 *molest*, trouble her solitude
15 *cell*, chamber, the grave
17 *incense-breathing*, smelling sweetly
19 *clarion*, trumpet
22 *ply her care*, do her work
26 *glebe*, plough land
27 *jocund*, cheerful
30 *destiny*, mode of life: *obscure*, little known of
32 *annals*, history of years
35 *inevitable*, that which cannot be escaped

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre:

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes

37 *impute fault*, blame 38 *trophies*, great monuments
39 *fretted*, carved 41 *storied urn*, monument with inscription
43 *provoke*, call out again to life 46 *pregnant with*, full of
48 *lyre*, harp 51 *Penury*, poverty: *rage*, genius 53 *ray*, radiance
59 *mute*, silent 61 *applause*, shouts of praise: *senates*, parliaments

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

65 *circumscribed*, bounded 71, 72 flatter with poetry the rich
75 *sequester'd*, quiet 76 *tenour*, character 80 *tribute*, offering
81 *unletter'd Muse*, untaught village poet 82 *elegy*, poem upon a person dead 84 *moralist*, thoughtful person
86 *this being*, this life 87 *precincts*, abodes 89 *parting*, departing
90 *pious drops*, tears of affection
91, 92 the dead have affections and desires

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
'Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
'To meet the sun upon the upland lawn;

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
'That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
'His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,
'And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
'Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
'Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
'Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

'One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
'Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
'Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
'Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

'The next with dirges due in sad array
'Slow through the church-way path we saw him
'borne,—
'Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
'Graved on the stone beneath yon agéd thorn.'

The Epitaph

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

93 *thee*, the Poet 94 *artless*, simple 96 *kindred spirit*, thoughtful man 97 *swain*, countryman 102 *fantastic*, twisted 104 *pore*, look steadily 105 *Hard by*, close to 113 *dirges*, funeral service 115 *lay*, epitaph 119 though poor, he was well educated

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven, 'twas all he wish'd, a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

T. Gray

* 81 *

TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire,
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied Joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

122 *recompense*, reward 125 *disclose*, make known
5 *profuse*, abundant: *unpremeditated*, not thought of before

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is here.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflow'd.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

21 *arrows*, rays 22 *sphere*, star
23 *intense lamp*, brilliant light 40 *to sympathy*, to feel
49 *aerial hue*, the faint light of the glow-worm

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingéd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal
Or triumphal chaunt
Match'd with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

55 *thieves*, the winds that steal the scent of the rose
56 *vernal*, in spring
65 *rapture*, delight
66, 67 marriage-song or song of victory
69 *vaunt*, boast

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then, as I am listening now!

P. B. Shelley

82 *deem*, think 80 *fraught*, laden 96 *measures*, music

* 82 *

A CRADLE SONG

HUSH ! my dear, lie still and slumber ;
Holy angels guard thy bed !
Heavenly blessings without number
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe ; thy food and raiment,
House and home, thy friends provide ;
All without thy care or payment
All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou'rt attended
Than the Son of God could be,
When from Heaven he descended,
And became a child like thee !

Soft and easy is thy cradle :
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay :
When his birth-place was a stable,
And his softest bed was hay.

See the kindly shepherds round him,
Telling wonders from the sky !
Where they sought him, there they found him,
With his Virgin-Mother by.

See the lovely babe a-dressing :
Lovely infant, how he smiled !
When he wept, the mother's blessing
Soothed and hush'd the holy child.

Lo, he slumbers in his manger,
Where the hornéd oxen fed ;
—Peace, my darling ! here's no danger !
Here's no ox a-near thy bed !

9 *attended*, waited on

—May'st thou live to know and fear him,
Trust and love him all thy days:
Then go dwell for ever near him;
See his face, and sing his praise.

I could give thee thousand kisses,
Hoping what I most desire:
Not a mother's fondest wishes
Can to greater joys aspire.

I. Watts

* 83 *

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty
Wherewith he wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,

36 *aspire*, hope
6 *forfeit*, punishment due for sin
15, 16 shall not this sacred subject be sung
19 *team*, chariot and horses, supposed to carry the sun

Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at his blesséd feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel quire
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

The Hymn

It was the winter wild
While the heaven-born Child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,

21 *host*, stars: *squadrons*, bands 23 *wizards*, the three king
24 *prevent*, go before: *ode*, solemn song 33 *doff'd*, put off
34 *sympathize*, show similar feeling 36 *paramour*, lover
39 *front*, forehead 48 *turning sphere*, see end

His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing ;
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around :
The idle spear and shield were high up hung ;
The hookéd chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood ;
The trumpet spake not to the arméd throng ;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began :
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild oceán—
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charméd wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence ;
And will not take their flight
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence ;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,

49 *harbinger* herald 50 *turtle*, dove 56 *hookéd*, with hooks at axletree 59 *awful*, full of fear 64 *whist*, hushed
71 *influence*, supposed power 74 *Lucifer*, the morning-star

As his inferior flame
The new-enlighten'd world no more should need :
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn
Or ere the point of dawn
Sate simply chatting in a rustic row ;
Full little thought they than
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below ;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet
As never was by mortal finger strook—
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringéd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took :
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature, that heard such sound
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat the aery region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling ;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all heaven and earth in happier union.

81 *As*, as if 86 *Or ere*, before 88 *than*, then
92 *silly*, simple 95 *strook*, struck 98 delighted their souls
100 *close*, cadence 102 within the Moon's (*Cynthia's*) orbit
103 *aery region*, the atmosphere

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light
That with long beams the shamefaced night array'd;
The helméd Cherubim
And sworded Seraphim
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made
But when of old the Sons of Morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the bass of Heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

116 *unexpressive*, such as no one could express
124 *weltering*, rolling 125 see end 132 *consort*, agreement: *symphony*, choral song 134 be audible to man
136 *speckled*, perhaps, plague-spotted 140 *dolorous*. sad

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says No;
This must not yet be so;
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those y-chain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep;

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The aged Earth aghast
With terrour of that blast
Shall from the surface to the centre shake,
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for from this happy day
The old Dragon, under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurpéd sway;

143 *Orb'd in*, encircled by
145 *sheen*, brightness
146 *tissued*, variegated
155 *y-chained*, *y* is a participial prefix
163 *session*, assembly for trial
168 *Dragon*, Satan

And wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swindges the scaly horrour of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs thro' the archéd roof in words deceiving:
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
No nightly trance or breathéd spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth
And on the holy hearth
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power forgoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice batter'd god of Palestine;
And moonéd Ashtaroth

172 *swindges*, lashes 177 *divine*, utter oracles; see end 186 *Genius*, Spirit of the place 191 *Lars and Lemures*, household gods and spirits of the dead 194 *Flamens*, Roman priests: *quaint*, here, usual 196 *forgoes*, quits 199 Dagon

Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine ;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn ;
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue ;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue ;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove, or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud :
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest ;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud ;
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoléd sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded infant's hand ;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn ;
Not all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine :
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damnéd crew.

215 *unshower'd*, watered by the Nile only
219 *timbrell'd anthems*, sacred songs, accompanied by timbrels
220 *stoléd*, mantled 223 *eyn*, eyes 226 *twine*, twists

So, when the sun in bed
Curtain'd with cloudy red
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
Time is, our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teemèd star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with hand-maid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd angels sit in order serviceable.

J. Milton

* 84 *

THE BURNING BABE

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat, which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,
A pretty babe, all burning bright, did in the air appear;
Who, scorchèd with excessive heat, such floods of tears did shed,
As though his floods should quench his flames which with his tears were fed:—

231 *orient*, in the east 232 see end 235 *fays*, fairies
236 *steeds*, mares: *maze*, dancing-ground 239 *tedious*, long
240 *teemèd*, born 241 the star is resting 244 *harness'd*, armoured

Alas!' quoth He, 'but newly born, in fiery heats I fry,
'Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel my fire but I!
'My faultless breast the furnace is, the fuel wounding thorns;
'Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, the ashes shame and scorns;
'The fuel Justice layeth on, and Mercy blows the coals,
'The metal in this furnace wrought are men's defiléd souls,
'For which, as now on fire I am, to work them to their good,
'So will I melt into a bath to wash them in my blood.'—
With this He vanish'd out of sight, and swiftly shrunk away;
And straight I calléd unto mind that it was Christmas-day.

R. Southwell

* 85 *

THE BROOK

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

7 *fry*, old use of the word for *burn*
1 *coot and hern* [*heron*], water-birds
brilliantly: literally, to skirmish in battle
12 *defiled*, sinful
4 *bicker*, go fast and
7 *thorps*, villages

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I CHATTER over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I WIND about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

14 *sharps and trebles*, light musical sounds 17 *fret*, wear 19 *fairy foreland*, pretty little projecting piece of bank 20 *willow-weed*, commonly called *willow-herb* 28 *grayling*, a kind of salmon 29 *flake*, streak 31 *waterbreak*, ripple

I STEAL by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Lord Tennyson

* 86 *

SONG TO THE OWL

I

WHEN cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

38 *covers*, bushes 43 see Notes 47 *bars*, little sand-banks

II

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

Lord Tennyson

* 87 *

AN AUTUMN SONG

I

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers:
To himself he talks;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh
In the walks;
Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks
Of the mouldering flowers:
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

II

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose
An hour before death;
My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves
At the moist rich smell of the rotting leaves,

9 *rarely*, deliciously
11 *roundelay*, song repeating itself
1 *haunts*, lives about

And the breath
Of the fading edges of box beneath,
And the year's last rose.
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

* 88 *

A MOTHER'S SONG

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea !
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me ;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon :
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

Lord Tennyson

* 89 *

THE MAY QUEEN

YOU must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear ;
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year ;

14 *silver sails*, white in the moonlight

Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine;
There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline:
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break:
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree?
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,
But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,
And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be:
They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that to me?
There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
And you'll be there too, mother, to see me made the Queen;
For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,
And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers;
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass;
There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green
and still,
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all
the hill,
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily
glance and play,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to
be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early,
mother dear,
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the
glad New-year:
To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest
merriest day,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to
be Queen o' the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE

If you're waking call me early, call me early,
mother dear,
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad
New-year.
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
Then you may lay me low i' the mould and
think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set: he set and left
behind
The good old year, the dear old time, and all
my peace of mind;
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall
never see
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon
the tree.

38 *crowfoot*, buttercup

Last May we made a crown of flowers: we had a merry day;
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May;
And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse,
Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills: the frost is on the pane:
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again:
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high:
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer o'er the wave,
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,
In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

12 *Charles's Wain*, the Great Bear stars 17 *building rook*, making its nest 21 *chancel-casement*, window at east end of the church

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light
You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night;
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.
I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now;
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go;
Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,
You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place;
Though you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face;
Though I cannot speak a word, I shall hearken what you say,
And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

25 *waning*, fading 27 *wold*, wild or woody country

Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight
for evermore,
And you see me carried out from the threshold
of the door;
Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave
be growing green:
She'll be a better child to you than I have ever
been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary
floor:
Let her take 'em: they are hers: I shall never
garden more:
But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rose-
bush that I set
About the parlour-window and the box of
mignonette.

Goodnight, sweet mother: call me before the
day is born.
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn;
But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-
year,
So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother
dear.

CONCLUSION

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive
I am;
And in the fields all round I hear the bleating
of the lamb.
How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of
the year!
To die before the snowdrop came, and now
the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,
And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,
And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done!
But still I think it can't be long before I find release;
And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair!
And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there!
O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head!
A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.
Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in:
Nor would I now be well, mother, again if that could be,
For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,
There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet:
But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call;
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all;
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear;
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here;
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd,
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,
And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said;
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping; and I said, 'It's not for them: it's mine.'
And if it come three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret;
There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife;
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere
this day is done
The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond
the sun—
For ever and for ever with those just souls and
true—
And what is life, that we should moan? why make
we such ado?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie
come—
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your
breast—
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary
are at rest.

Lord Tennyson

* 90 *

A FAREWELL

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver:
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river:
No where by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

2 *tribute wave*, water which the *rivulet*, little stream, brings to the sea.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver ;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver ;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Lord Tennyson

14 *quiver*, shake, tremble

End of Second Part

NOTES:

MAINLY HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL

PAGE NO.

1 1 This rough but spirited poem, with a very few more, give Drayton a claim to remembrance, which his long and laborious chronicles in rhyme have failed to secure.

Agincourt was fought October 25, 1415. A history of England, and Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth* should be read with this poem.

3 — Line 48, The *lilies* are the Fleur-de-Lys, long the arms of France, as the Lions are of England.

5 2 Southey, like Drayton, has left little work vividly penetrated with the spirit of poetry, in comparison with his many pages of skilful and industrious manufacture. This piece has something of the merit shown in Wordsworth's tales: but it wants Wordsworth's exquisiteness

7 3 Simple as *Lucy Gray* seems, a mere narrative of what 'has been and may be again,' yet every detail in it is marked by the deepest and purest 'ideal' character. Hence it is not strictly a pathetic poem, pathetic as the situation is. So far as this element has a place, Wordsworth asks that we should feel for the parents, rather than for the child: she is painted as a creature, 'made one with Nature' in her death, not less than in her life.

10 5 This little poem, again, within, its sphere, in ideal perfection rivals the most perfect work of the world's greatest lyrical poets.—Readers who smile, are invited to try to 'do likewise.'

21 12 Within its range, the *Ancient Mariner* is 'alone in its glory':—but the crown must have been given to *Christabel*, had Coleridge completed that poem, and completed it in the style of the two parts which we have.

The *Memoirs* of Wordsworth give an interesting narrative of the mode in which the *Ancient Mariner* was written: The dream of a friend, according to Coleridge, was the foundation; but by far the greatest part of the story is due to the poet's mind. The introduction of the Albatross, and the working of the ship by the dead sailors, were motives suggested by Wordsworth, who also supplied a very few lines, as the friends walked together over the lovely Quantock Hills in the autumn of 1797.—Such were the external circumstances under which this masterpiece was created: it is pleasant to know them; but all that made it such is the poet's secret.

43 14 Line 5, It is not clear whether by *fairy-flax* the poet means *graceful* and *fairylike*, or whether it be a local name for some species of the plant.

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48 16 Glencoe, the 'Valley of Weeping,' is a savage glen on the north-western coast of Argyllshire. The murder of the Macdonalds who were settled in it, by the Earls of Breadalbane and Argyll, and (most prominently) Sir John Dalrymple of Stair, has been told by Macaulay with equal historical force and judicial fairness.

49 17 Line 12, Marvell belonged to the 'Puritan' party; and the Emigrants here intended are persons of that party flying from ecclesiastical pressure during the first half of the seventeenth century. Lines 35, 36 present a curious example of 'anti-climax'; but the poem, as a whole, is very sweet and original.

51 18,19 Noble, if rough, pieces of work. In Bunyan's, there may be an echo of Shakespeare's *Under the greenwood tree*, No. 31.

55 23 Very full explanatory notes have been subjoined to this and to other poems written in local dialect, in hope that children may thus be tempted to conquer (to their own great advantage) the sense of difficulty and repulsion which the first sight of a vocabulary, differing slightly from the common literary form, never fails to rouse.

56 24 After the capture of Madrid by Napoleon, Sir J. Moore retreated before Soult and Ney, the French commanders, to Corunna, in North-west Spain, and was killed whilst covering the embarkation of his troops. His tomb, built by Ney, bears this inscription—'John Moore, leader of the English armies, slain in battle, 1809.'

57 25 Founded on a real story of the English campaign in China, 1860.

63 29 Eminently characteristic of Scott in its music. It has an airy freedom and freshness, a certain magical quality; one might fancy that the actual voice of the wildwood was audible in it.

66 34 The *Thanksgiving*, and No. 36, are delightful pictures of English country life two centuries ago.

80 44 There is something of the sublime in the severe and pathetic simplicity of this little piece.

81 45 Perhaps no poem in this collection is more delicately fancied, more exquisitely finished. By placing the description of the Fawn in a young girl's mouth, Marvell has legitimated that abundance of 'imaginative hyperbole' to which he is always partial; he makes us feel it quite natural that the maiden's favourite should be whiter than milk, sweeter than sugar, 'lilies without, roses within.' The poet's imagination is, as it were, justified in its seeming extravagance by the intensity and unity with which it invests the poem,—and the reader's pleasure is proportionately intensified.

The verdict of Time is not always just and conclusive, even after many years. Undeserved contemporary fame is sometimes traditionally prolonged; sometimes, though less often, the crown, fairly won, is withheld for centuries. Of this latter injustice, Marvell is an example. We cannot place him among our 'greater gods' of song; yet, within his own sphere, no one has more decided originality, more vivid imagination, more attractive and enduring charm.

PAGE	NO	
82	46	This poem (inserted on the ground of its *naïveté* and originality) is one of a series described as by Charles and Mary Lamb. The style seems to warrant its ascription to the latter.
84	48	An old fragment, completed with exquisite skill by Burns. His version of No. 49 is not equally successful. It would, indeed, hardly be possible to improve such a little masterpiece of music, tenderness, and simplicity.
85	50	A justly-famous piece of 'Cavalier' poetry: Lovelace was brought twice to prison by his devotion to Charles I. *Thames* (line 10), by a classical form of metaphor, is used for *water*.
86	51	Compare the note on Nos. 48, 49:—These poems may (perhaps) a little exceed the boundary line laid down in the Preface; but the Editor did not know how to omit them.
93	55	Our collection has much loftier pieces of poetry than Cowper's *Cat*, but none in which poetical skill is more consummate.
107	65	Sir Hyde Parker commanded in this battle, fought in April 1801 in order to detach Denmark from the Northern coalition which hindered the singlehanded attempt of England to curb Napoleon Bonaparte. Nelson's spirit of heroic gallantry never blazed higher than here. Riou was killed in command of a squadron.
111	68	The insertion of these grandly-simple, almost Homeric stanzas is due to the suggestion of Mr W. E. Gladstone:—of No. 79, equally fine in its wild intensity of imagination, to Mr R. Browning. The Cyclops were the assistants of Vulcan, the god of the forge, in old mythology: Jove was the king of all.
114	70	The vivid incident (A.D. 627), characteristic in every way of the English mind, upon which the poem is founded, is told by the old English historian Bede.
118	74	The subjects chosen by Vaughan and Herbert have mostly placed their poems beyond the limits of this selection; but they will be found 'treasures for ever' by readers who find more attraction in the matter than in the manner of poetry. Line 17 refers either to the imagined carbuncle, or to the brief luminosity which the diamond retains after exposure to sunshine.
124	80	For wealth of condensed thought and imagery, fused into one equable stream of golden song by intense fire of genius, the Editor knows no poem superior to this *Elegy*,—none quite equal. Nor has the difficulty of speaking well on common topics, without exaggeration yet with unfailing freshness and originality, been ever met with greater success. Line after line has the perfection of a flawless jewel: it is hard to find a word that could have been spared, or changed for the better. This condensation, however, has injured the clearness of the poem: the specific gravity of the gem, if we may pursue the image, has diminished its translucent qualities. Many notes have hence been added;—the useful but prosaic task of paraphrase is best left to the reader, who may make one for his benefit, and then burn it for his pleasure.
133	82	Shelley's masterpiece, in the shorter form of lyric (as, if such a judgment be permissible, all things considered, the Editor would hold the *Skylark*,) follows Gray's:

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and in No. 83 we have one of the most stately and musical odes in our or any language. With these, Watts' verses come like the child they describe into a company of kings and conquerors. Indeed, the admirable author of the *Cradle Song* almost apologized for publishing it;—yet within its little sphere, this also is a masterpiece:—Reynolds himself does not paint childhood with a more absolute tenderness.

Here, as in other instances within our selection, it will be useful if the reader pauses and considers how many ways true art offers for reaching excellence. The 'House of Poetry,' if we may so call it, truly has 'many mansions': size and splendour are not the only elements of success: here, as elsewhere, the poet's words are true—

> In small proportions we just beauties see;
> And in short measures life may perfect be.

134 83 Milton imagined this magnificent ode at dawn of Christmas-day 1629, having then lately passed his twenty-first birthday, and completed his Cambridge course. The poem, if compared with *L'Allegro* or *Comus*, moves somewhat heavily at times, and as if embarrassed by its weight of historical allusion: Milton has proved his armour, but does not yet wear it with perfect ease. Yet this stateliness of movement, as in sacred music, befits the subject.

135 83 Line 37, Nature is here treated by Milton as 'guilty,' as impersonating a 'fallen world.' The heathen religions, in the latter part of the Ode, are similarly regarded rather as demon-worship than as the imperfect and corrupted efforts of man to reach the truth.

— — Line 47, The *olive* and the *myrtle* (line 51) have for many centuries been regarded as emblems of Peace and her blessings.

— — Line 48, *turning sphere;* the whole Universe is here thought of as a whirling orb, hung from heaven.

136 — Line 68, The 'halcyon days,' when the king-fishers were breeding, and the sea supposed to be supernaturally calm, were placed by the ancients in midwinter.

137 — Line 89, *Pan*, God of shepherds, here used for the Lord of All.

138 — Line 110, *globe;* here seemingly bears the military sense of body of troops.

— — Line 125, The Universe was by the Greeks supposed to consist of crystal spheres concentrically arranged, the sound of which as they moved formed a heavenly music, too fine for human hearing.

— — Line 135, By the 'age of gold' the old poets meant the earliest and best time of the world.

140 — Lines 173—236, Milton here works out at length the tradition that the power of the heathen gods ended with the birth of Our Saviour. *Oracles* were answers given to enquirers at certain holy places, as Delphos (line 178): *Nymphs* (line 188) goddesses of wood and field.

141 — Line 204, *Thammuz* or Adonis was feigned to die and revive yearly in Lebanon. *Osiris* (line 213) was the god of the Nile, torn to pieces by Typhon, and embalmed in a

PAGE	NO	
		sacred chest. The Bull-form belongs, however, to Apis, another Egyptian deity.
142	83	Line 232, The old belief was, that spirits fled away at dawning to their prisons underground.
—	—	Line 243, *courtly*, the stable of Bethlehem being figured as a palace.
142	84	Ben Jonson, a man who rated himself highly, said If he had written that piece, the *Burning Babe*, he would have been content to destroy many of his own poems :—and Jonson's enthusiasm is well justified by the passionate intensity and picturesqueness of this lovely mystical lyric.
147	88	One of the songs interspersed in the *Princess*.

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